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The Nation.

February 22, 1986 $1.25; U.K. 65p

EDITORIAL

THE LETHAL SHUTTLE

Far more than seven people would have died if the explosion that destroyed Challenger had occurred during the next launch, which had been planned for May. NASA and the Department of Energy intended to use that mission to fire a space probe powered by 46.7 pounds of plutonium. The rocket was to explore the atmosphere of Jupiter.

Plutonium is regarded by most scientists as the most toxic substance in the universe. An ounce widely dispersed in tiny particles could cause millions of cases of lung cancer. An explosion like the one that disintegrated Challenger would have caused the maximum possible dispersion.

The plan to carry the plutonium-powered space probe on the shuttle came to the attention of reporter Karl Grossman when he read about Project Galileo, as the Jupiter mission is called, in a 1983 government publication. With help from the Fund for Open Information and Accountability he filed a Freedom of Information Act request that yielded voluminous documents on the possibility of a shuttle explosion. The likelihood of an accident was said to be remote, however. According to a draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared by NASA:

> The launch of the Galileo Payload would involve a very small risk of releasing plutonium-238 to the environment because of the possibility of malfunction of the Space Shuttle. This risk should be small due to the high reliability inherent in the design of the Space Shuttle.

Hundreds of references to the consequences of various plutonium-dispersing explosions were deleted on the ground that "the information could reasonably be expected to cause damage to national security."

Following the Challenger disaster, the flight scheduled to carry the Project Galileo spacecraft was suspended indefinitely. That suspension should be made permanent.

FAREWELL, FLEET STREET
Christopher Hitchens

URUGUAY'S ROAD BACK
Samuel Chavkin

ZIMBABWE REVISITED
David Caute

NEUROLOGY WITH HEART
Brina Caplan

THE BAD SHEPARD
Paul Berman

DANCERS AND THE DANCE
Mindy Aloff

IN UNIONS, STRENGTH

WHY THE DEMOCRATS NEED LABOR

HAROLD MEYERSON

What is killing the center-left in American politics? If the polls have any validity, the culprit is not an ideological shift to the right. President Reagan's programs seem to be in increasing disrepute, even though his personal popularity holds steady. Nor does the internationalization of capital deserve all the blame. The new world economy may have destroyed many longstanding assumptions of social democratic politics, but social democratic parties are alive and electorally viable in a number of Western European nations.

Alone among the industrialized democracies, however, the United States has experienced one particular shift in its balance of social forces: over the past three decades, union membership is down by roughly half, from 35.5 percent of the nonagricultural work force in 1955 to just under 20 percent today. More than any other change in American society, deunionization has crippled American liberalism and the Democratic Party, both electorally and doctrinally.

Prescriptions for a Democratic revival characteristically ignore or minimize the importance of unions. For the short-term that may seem realistic; unions are in desperate shape. But many of the arguments that dismiss the role of unions in the Democrats' future are based on two debatable premises. The first is that unions can't turn out the vote as they used to, that, as Blair Clark wrote in these pages, labor's tilt toward the Democrats amounts to nothing more than "a slight shift within the middle class" [see "Can We Put New Life Into the Party?" November 2, 1985]. The second is that the economic policies

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LETTERS.

WAIT A MINUTE, MESSRS. POSTMAN

Philadelphia

As a philosopher and historian of science I applaud the principle that animates the argument of Neil Postman and Marc Postman ["Teaching Creationism," Jan. 11]. The students that I see have not been taught that science is a human enterprise, nor that even the humblest of true developments in science is won (as is so much else in human affairs) through unrelenting commitment and struggle. Facts are *not* easily come by, and they must be interpreted in appropriate contexts and against reasonable alternative interpretations. Sadly, most of the university-level students I have seen seem to have been taught that sciences are forms of revealed truth. They are made uncomfortable by open-ended questions, which abound in all the sciences, and are ignorant of the procedures involved in arguing on all sides of an issue, a prerequisite for a good scientist. No wonder they cannot cope easily with technical questions that also involve moral or political concerns, such as abortion and nuclear disarmament. And no wonder they are easy prey to those who know how to package and sell simplistic dogma as the Truth, such as the religious right and the Reagan Administration. If high-school students were taught the procedures and principles for evaluating theories, as the authors suggest, I am sure it would be all to the good, as these students' critical faculties would flourish instead of atrophy.

Having said all this, I confess I am greatly puzzled by the authors' application of their good principle: that creationism be taught in our schools. Yes, we need to teach all sides of an issue, but must we teach refuted scientific theories as well as the current contenders? If that is so, then we must teach Ptolemaic as well as post-Copernican astronomy, for creation science is quite as refuted as the hypothesis that the Earth is the center of the universe. . . .

The authors claim we should teach creationism in schools because it is believed by many Americans and because it claims the status of science. As far as I am concerned, a refuted scientific theory is still scientific, but it should be taught in history courses, not science courses. No doubt creationism "has a hold on the minds and emotions of large numbers of Americans," but the major reason is that we have never taught Darwinian theory adequately in our high schools (or even, in many cases, in our universities). High-school students interested in biology are far more likely to learn about twentieth-century developments, such as the cracking of the genetic code, than about the scientific details of Darwin's monumental discoveries. Despite their claims to be scientific, most creationists have precious little to say about the nitty gritty of natural history, ecology, speciation, geology or paleontology. There are indeed questions about the fossil record, as the authors note, but there is no "creationist interpretation" of that record beyond the brilliant botanist Asa Gray's century-old notion of "guided variation," which has long since been refuted and discarded.

Do let us teach critical thinking and evaluation of science and technology to our high-school students. It will help them understand such gigantic scams as nuclear power or Star Wars, and that is all to the good. Such critical acumen should also serve our students in good stead when they come face to face with outdated and inadequate modes of understanding, such as creationism. And if we progressives do our jobs right, these same students will learn to think for themselves about the difficult moral/technical issues of modern society and develop important radical insights. None of these positive developments would be aided by our teaching refuted scientific theories and passing them off as biology.

Edward S. Reed
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Drexel University

CREATIONISM AS POLITICS

Atlanta

I read with some disappointment the rather naïve and shallow editorial by Neil Postman and Marc Postman. The authors do not seem to understand that the current assault on evolution as "just another theory" is not any isolated phenomenon; it belongs to the larger right-wing/authoritarian strategy to control the minds and bodies of the American people! As the distinguished paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould put it in 1981: "It would be easy, but desperately wrong, merely to dismiss the creationist revival as a form of unreasoned stupidity. One may have contempt—indeed I do—for the TV preachers who fill their coffers by upholding Genesis against the world. As a professional evolutionist, I am inevitably drawn into this battle. Other leftists might dismiss it as unimportant, if not a bit ludicrous. But I remind everyone that creationism is just one part of the evangelical right in America. The other parts—from anti-E.R.A., to antiabortion, to militant (if not military) anticommunism—are more easily appreciated as threats. All parts are of a piece; all are surrogates, one for the other. We are all in this together." *Dr. John G. Papastavridis*

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

St. Charles, Mo.

If we pay heed to the enlightened perspective offered by Neil Postman and Marc Postman we may begin to reduce some of the obfuscation and controversy about creationism versus evolution in the public's mind. As an anthropologist who teaches human evolution, I have been doing exactly what the authors have suggested: that is, presenting both creationist and evolutionist theory and then letting students assess each one according to scientific criteria. The creationist theory, as the authors suspect, does fail ignominiously in explaining fossil evidence, geological factors, etc.

Yet many in the scientific community are afraid to teach creationism because they view it as a violation of the separation of state and church. I agree with those who want to strengthen the wall between the state and the church. But, realistically, the fundamentalists have confused the public with their claims for creationism and have put the scientific community (at least in the public's mind) on the defensive. The most positive way to deal with this issue is to subject creationist theory to the scientific method in the classroom and see how it holds up. As Postman and Postman state, "that would be an authentic education in science."

Raymond Scupin
Lindenwood College

. . . YET THERE IS METHOD IN 'T

Oxford, Ohio

Neil Postman and Marc Postman are right in calling for American public schools to teach creationism.

I teach the successes of American public education, and most of my students see science not as a method for asking questions about nature but as a body of facts to be memorized.

Bringing Darwinism and neo-Darwinism—and those *ism* suffixes are significant—into competition with creationism would have all the advantages Postman and Postman cite for introducing students to the philosophy of science. Equally important, it would push students to discuss issues related to science, religion and philosophy, and start them thinking about an important anthropological issue for all aspects of a culture: the selection of a creation myth.

Using the Darwinism-creationism debate in teaching the philosophy of science is an obvious target of opportunity for the schools. The author's proposal for a critical examination of the debate won't get very far only because relatively few adults in America support *teaching*; most Americans want the schools to lay on the kids some version or other of Truth. *Richard D. Erlich*
Associate professor in English
Miami University

POSTMAN REPLIES

New York City

I thank Edward S. Reed for his supportive tone and thank him as well for the excellent

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Manuscripts: All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish 3rd

Associate Publisher, David Parker; *Advertising Director,* Chris Calhoun; *Business Manager,* Ann B. Epstein; *Bookkeeper,* Ivor A. Richardson; *Art/Production Manager,* Jane Sharples; *Circulation Director,* Stephen W. Soule; *Director of Development and Publicity,* Micah L. Sifry; *Subscription Manager,* Cookee V. Klein; *Assistant Advertising Manager,* Neil Black; *Receptionist,* Greta Loell; *Mail Clerk,* John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary,* Shirley Sulat; *Production,* Terry Miller; *Typography,* David Acker, Randall Cherry; *Nation Associates Director,* Nancy Bacher; *Nation News Service,* Jeff Sorensen.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by The Nation Company, Inc. Directors: Arthur Carter, Hamilton Fish 3rd, Victor Navasky. © 1986 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. (212) 242-8400. *Washington Bureau:* Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue N.E., Washington, DC 20002. (202) 546-2239. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION. Subscription orders, changes of address and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation,* Box 1953, Marion, OH 43305. *Subscription Price:* One year, $45; two years, $81. Add $7 per year for postage in Canada, Mexico; $13 per year for other foreign. Claims for missed issues must be made within 60 days (120 days foreign) of publication date. **Please allow 6-8 weeks for receipt of your first issue and for all subscription transactions.** Back issues $3 prepaid ($4 foreign) from: *The Nation,* 72 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011. *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

EDITORIALS.

Iacocca Ousted

After nearly four years of sitting back and letting Lee Iacocca run the show, the Interior Department suddenly got tough last week and gave him the boot as chair of the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Centennial Commission. At a hastily called news conference that took the Chrysler head by surprise, Interior Secretary Donald Hodel announced that Iacocca had been fired as the $265 million restoration project's policy chief because of a potential conflict of interest.

The allegation comes as no surprise to our readers, who first learned of the project's myriad problems—including mismanagement, profiteering, conflicts of interest, corporate commercialization, cronyism and boondoggling—last year, in two *Nation* articles based on a three-month investigation by Roberta Brandes Gratz and Eric Fettmann [see "The Selling of Miss Liberty," November 9, and "The Battle for Ellis Island," November 30].

Gratz and Fettmann showed how a carefully designed process of public-private cooperation, involving a government commission with subcommittees of architectural and preservation experts, was deliberately and completely coopted by the private Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, controlled and later headed by Iacocca. The foundation sought to overrule the government and push its own plan for restoring the two islands, one that would h-

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dramatically altered the character and substance of both historic landmarks.

Hodel's action was ostensibly precipitated by Iacocca's insistence that two individuals who served on both the commission and the board of the private fund-raising foundation resign from one of the posts because of potential conflicts of interest. Fine, responded Hodel, once he heard of Iacocca's demand. But he pointed out that Iacocca's role as chair of both groups was just as much a potential conflict and asked him to quit one or the other. Iacocca indignantly refused. After a week of meetings and an angry exchange of letters, in which Iacocca said his resignation would be a breach of faith to the people who had sent him money, Hodel abruptly told Iacocca his services were no longer desired. Not that Iacocca is out of the project entirely. He still heads the foundation, which controls the purse strings and is legally accountable to no one.

With its gala "unveiling," produced by David Wolper, already in place for the July 4th weekend, little can be done to rectify the damage Iacocca's fund-raising campaign has done to the Statue of Liberty. The corporate franchise contracts, which allowed a "Coca-Cola Cabbage Patch Kids for Liberty" sales campaign and an official luncheon meat, remain legally binding on the Interior Department and National Park Service.

Ellis Island's future is still up in the air. In the end it may have been Iacocca's intransigence on this vital issue that cost him his job. Hodel appeared to sit back calmly last fall when Iacocca announced that he was scrubbing three years' worth of work by preservationists, architects and Park Service officials, who appeared to have finally reached a consensus on a restoration plan for Ellis Island. Iacocca said that he was going back to square one. He reorganized the commission and asked it to re-evaluate all Ellis Island plans, particularly his own dream of an "ethnic Williamsburg," which was to be realized through foundation architect John Burgee's proposal to demolish some of the island's historic structures. At that point it had been two and a half years since Iacocca had agreed to call a commission meeting, although he was legally required to hold them quarterly. And the future of America's great immigrant entry point was to be decided not by the experts who had worked so hard to thrash out a plan for Ellis Island, but by the commission's new members, who were largely major corporate executives with financial ties to Iacocca's private fund-raising foundation. That development alone made Iacocca's angry declaration that he resents "any inference . . . of conflict of interest" more than a little suspect.

The General Accounting Office is currently auditing the foundation's finances, and sources told Gratz and Fettmann that its report, expected in the spring, will conclude that "the project is succeeding in spite of itself." The Interior Department is clearly concerned about the G.A.O.'s possible conclusions; recently, sources revealed, Hodel ordered department officials Keith Eastin and William Horn to resign as voting members of the foundation board in anticipation of a G.A.O. finding that they had conflicts of interest. It was Eastin who had reversed the Park Service's policy of accepting outside contributions, so that all commercial fund-raising now has to be funneled through the foundation, on whose board he sits. As a result hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of "unauthorized" contributions by well-meaning small-business owners have been returned to insure that the foundation's fat-cat sponsors have exclusive rights to Miss Liberty's image.

Anticipation of the G.A.O. audit's conflict of interest charges may be the real reason Hodel ousted Iacocca. The Secretary had known of the dual chairmanship for more than a year and had done nothing. Indeed, sources said, Hodel himself had ordered Iacocca to become the foundation chair so that the public would have no doubt as to who was running the show there.

Had the Interior Department and Park Service woken up to Iacocca's corporate takeover years ago, the franchising of Miss Liberty could have been avoided. It's too late for that, but perhaps the sacking of Lee Iacocca is a sign that the Federal government is finally moving to take back control of one of its most precious historic landmarks before it too is Iacocca-ed into oblivion.

Reform or Change?

Strategies for the advancement of American interests in the world, like brief blizzards in late winter, spend all their energy and demand every attention in their small moments of history, and then melt from memory as if they had hardly happened. Where are they now: Dulles's brinkmanship, Kennedy's developmentalism, the Nixon Doctrine and Vietnamization, Kissinger's holy alliance of the superpowers, Carter's human rights crusade, Brzezinski's decentralized imperialism? Only the names remain and, more often than not, in fanciful associations. Most people today don't know that Dulles bragged about bringing the country to the edge of nuclear war, and would guess instead that he was the fellow who built that airport in Virginia. Didn't the Nixon Doctrine lay down rules for laundering money and playing dirty tricks? Brzezinski must be the dissident Polish priest under house arrest in Gdansk—or perhaps the society novelist in New York who had other people write his books. The strategies, the doctrines, the policies and the grand designs, like their creators, are assured of only a quarter-hour on the stage of celebrity.

A sense of the evanescence of strategic design is useful in assessing Ronald Reagan's most recent concept. At some point between the Constituent Assembly elections in El Salvador in 1983 and the presidential elections in that country the following year, the Administration turned from a policy of uniform support for right-wing regimes in Third World trouble spots to a strategy of selective pre-emptive reform. The Salvadoran mad-dog militarist, Col. Roberto D'Aubuisson, who had been the White House favorite in the first election, was abandoned in favor of the moderate José Napoleón Duarte, in the second. Of course, the radical right of Reaganism was outraged.

But the experiment in evolutionism seemed to work so well in El Salvador, at least at the beginning, that the Ad-

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ministration was encouraged to disregard the objections of the Republican creationists—those who believe that God made right-wing tyrants and they must never be removed—about other countries in the world. The State Department pressured President P.W. Botha in South Africa to moderate the most visible horrors of apartheid, to free Nelson Mandela, to begin talking with the black opposition and to think the unthinkable about majority participation in political power. U.S. embassies in Latin American countries from Guatemala to Argentina supported centrist and in some cases quite liberal candidates in elections to replace regimes once favored by Washington. The new strategy reached its apogee in the past few weeks, as the United States supervised the fall and flight of Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti and threw its considerable weight into the campaign of Corazon Aquino to unseat President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines.

Unreconstructed reactionaries have been scandalized. Jerry Falwell and the religious right are trying to get the United States back on the track of unambiguous support for racism in Africa and authoritarianism in Asia. Former U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, who formulated the previous Reagan strategy of alliance with authoritarianism, suggested that the United States might end up like Magellan, "discoverer of the Philippines," if it pursued its interventions. "Magellan made the fatal mistake of joining in the battles between Philippine tribes," she wrote (quoting unnamed historians) in her syndicated column. "On the shores of a Philippine island in a petty skirmish over a cause he never understood, the great Magellan was hacked to death."

Each new foreign policy strategy, like every war, is developed in response to the most recent defeat. Reagan's consideration of events in Haiti and the Philippines, as well as El Salvador, South Africa and other critical areas, is clearly based on the perceived failures of U.S. policy in Iran and Nicaragua. Successive administrations obviously kept the Shah and Somoza in power too long; when the rug was pulled out from under those despots, American imperial interests went flying too. President Carter's halfhearted attempts to insert a moderate secular successor to the Shah in Iran and a pro-American government in Nicaragua under a cleaned-up National Guard came far too late in the day.

What perhaps should be called the emerging Magellan strategy seeks to address the fatal mistakes of the old policy. It accepts the inevitability of the national liberation process in the Third World, against the best neoconservative advice, but it hopes to nip the dialectic in the bud. Duvalier was hustled out of Haiti in the earliest stages of an insurgency, when only a crowd of kids had taken to the streets and a radical politics was still undeveloped. No danger there of an institutionalized revolution, à la Sandinismo, at least not for a while. In the Philippines the revolutionary New People's Army is rapidly growing in strength, but it is hardly at the gates of Manila; it's possible that political reform could keep the system intact, the ruling elites in power and American interests secure. South Africa seems a harder case to crack, but those wily neo-Marxists in the State Department apparently hope they can outmaneuver history by promising the black masses progress if they delay their demands for power. And everywhere, the Administration is offering economic aid in return for acceptance of its strategic plans.

If all this sounds familiar it's because it was tried only a few decades back. Bruised and befuddled by the "loss" of Cuba, foreign policy makers at the end of the Eisenhower era and the beginning of Kennedy's term removed support from long-favored dictators, and in some cases encouraged their assassination. Gen. Rafael Trujillo—"our son of a bitch," in Roosevelt's famous phrase—was the first to see his head roll into the sanitary landfill of history. Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem's murder, two years later, marked the end of the strategy's short life. Between those deadly parentheses was the Alliance for Progress, massive foreign aid, Food for Peace, the Peace Corps and a concerted effort to decolonize those lands still under European control and to reform those regimes under home-grown tyranny.

Kennedy's policy was for the most part an egregious failure because it never addressed the complex structural problems that promoted insurgency and conflict in the Third World: deep dysfunctions in the life of the various countries and disequilibriums in the international post-colonial and imperial economic system. The celebrations in Santo Domingo when Trujillo fell turned into fire fights against the U.S. Marines dispatched by Lyndon Johnson four years later to destroy a radical movement dedicated to changes more sweeping than America would allow. There's no reason to believe Reagan will have more success than his predecessors. His new strategy is concerned with formal reforms at the top, not with structural change. In many ways it's worse than the Kennedy policy, for it would install the tyranny of the marketplace where the fallen tyrants stood. And it keeps its *contra*-insurgency guns in place should there be any further revolt. The Duarte example, the first of the series, is already turning sour. Haitians will not be satisfied with a mellow junta pursuing a course essentially no different from a murderous dictator's.

In the Philippines, events may have already overwhelmed the Administration's strategy. The bright idea of forcing Marcos to call an election he would lose, and of encouraging an Aquino-Laurel succession to comply fully with American strategic demands, went dark after a week of violence, voting fraud and parliamentary chicanery. Not for the first time Reagan appeared dazed and distracted, seeming to acquiesce in a Marcos victory at his press conference last week. But the outcry his remarks provoked in the Philippines was a reminder that Aquino's courageous candidacy has unleashed hopes for change that may not be readily accommodated with the tidy plan for Marcos to leave and Aquino to inherit the mantle of bulwark against Bolshevism in the Pacific. Liberal interventionism—another name for Reagan's new policy—has its contradictions, and Kirkpatrick's bloody vision may turn out to be not far off the mark.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

London

Thatcher's Britain seems to have been overtaken by a fashion for fortification. You see it from the moment you arrive at Heathrow Airport, which is often ringed with armored vehicles and permanently patrolled by policemen with submachine guns. And if you visit large tracts of East Anglia, Berkshire or Oxfordshire, you will find yourself confronted by thickets of razor wire marking the territory of the United States Air Force, and the present and future sites of cruise missile silos. There is increasingly less pretense that these establishments are under British control: as often as not they are guarded by armed and uniformed Americans. In a particularly bold gesture the U.S.A.F. even cordoned off a few cubic miles of fresh air the other day, declaring the skies over a large area of Oxfordshire to be off-limits to anyone but itself. The servile Conservative press wrote of this as a possible impediment to British balloonists and parachutists, nothing more.

But the very latest in fortresses has sprung fully armed from the soil of Wapping, a plebeian London suburb. It is here that Rupert Murdoch, that sultan of sleaze and titan of trash, has pulled off his most daring coup to date. On a fine morning in late January he called together the workers from his newspapers, which now constitute most of the top and all of the bottom of the Fleet Street market, and issued an ultimatum. Either get on a well-guarded bus and move at once to a secret nonunion plant—in which case you will receive an extra £2,000 per annum and free medical insurance—or you are fired. No vote, no decision-making period, now or ever. In a rather unappetizing facsimile of the British class system, the journalists mostly said yes and the blue-collar workers mostly said no. The gentlemen of the press now bring out *The Times* from behind barbed wire, security guards and floodlights, while the printers walk a picket line in the fairly certain knowledge that they will never work again. The remaining Fleet Street managements are under pressure to follow suit, and with unemployment running nationally at almost 14 percent, it will be extremely difficult for any union to mutter in opposition.

Sympathy for the print workers has been qualified by their long attachment to overmanning and their devotion to what is known along the Street of Shame as "old Spanish customs," featuring wage packets made out to M. Mouse and D. Duck, the passing of jobs from father to son and the exclusion of women and minority groups from the skilled craft jobs. This *On the Waterfront* style of unionism has given Murdoch his chance and has mobilized sympathy behind him. It has always been his ambition to transform editors and writers into technicians and underlings. Now, under the guise of "modernization" and "rationalization"—the two key words of the technological determinist—he has succeeded in doing so. Documents released by the trade unions, and reported by some of Fleet Street's few surviving independent journalists, show that Murdoch lured the unions into a snare. The Wapping fortress had been kept a secret for almost a year while *Times* management pretended to negotiate a new contract.

In a year or so the words "Fleet Street" will connote nothing but a memory. The entire British press, conglomerated as it is among various real estate barons, will have moved to nonunion, sunset-sunrise sites on the edge of London. Reporters and compositors will have been definitively taught their place, which, to judge by an average day's reading, will be to celebrate Toryism and the brave, innovative leadership of Margaret Thatcher. Fleet Street has always been a Conservative slum, and there is little reason to feel sentimental about its passing. But in what now look like the good old days, there was at least a show of objectivity.

It could be a mistake to mourn the old collaboration between feudal, hereditary management and servile, self-interested trade unionism. The new situation at least makes it cheaper to produce a newspaper, and it will be fascinating to see who takes advantage of an opportunity that was once limited to the very wealthy. There are only two entrants in the market as I write. The first, to be called *Today*, is the spawn of a bulbous, philistine entrepreneur with the apposite name of Eddie Shah. Addicted to color pictures, sports, gossip and sensation, it is modeled on the uninformative quick-take *USA Today*. The second fresh competitor is altogether more encouraging. It is founded by a small but hardy collection of literate veterans. It is not a slave to advertisers. It has a softheaded weakness for the Social Democratic Party, which may change as experience erodes the illusions of the middle ground. It hopes to be on the stands in a few months, and its provisional title, hallowed in British journalism since the nineteenth century, is *The Nation*.

* * *

Even as Fleet Street backs her with ever greater ardor and hysteria, Margaret Thatcher is visibly losing her grip. She parted with two of her senior ministers in a bitter fracas over the future of the Westland helicopter company, and she temporarily lost her parliamentary majority in a tremendous punch-up over the British automobile industry. In both cases the issue was control of British manufacturing by American capital. The helicopter business would have passed lock, stock and barrel to the Sikorsky Company if it had not been for a Cabinet revolt, and the same Cabinet is now debating whether Ford or General Motors should take possession of British Leyland. As in all such cases, it is not the decision that has caused the trouble but the lies told to justify the decision. It has been extraordinary to see the length to which a sovereign government will go in order not to offend the Anglo-American "special relationship." Leon Brittan, the Trade Minister who told most of the lies, did so on his own account because he wanted to avoid "anti-Americanism." This has not saved him from being called, on his own back benches and on the record, a shifty Jew. If there is one thing nastier than the sight of Tories flushed with success it is Tories when they are rattled. You might think a government that waved the flag with one hand and mortgaged the country to cruise missiles with the other could sink no lower. But if you thought that, you would be wrong.

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ARTICLES.

URUGUAY UNDER CIVILIAN RULE

The Rough Road Back to Democracy

SAMUEL CHAVKIN

Montevideo

Upon landing at the airport one bright, sunny afternoon recently, there was an announcement that there would be a two-hour delay in luggage pickup because the porters were out on a work stoppage to protest their low wages. Later that day, while walking along Avenida 18 de Julio, one of the principal streets in the downtown area, I was engulfed by a rapidly growing crowd of marchers converging on Plaza Entrevero to protest the government's proposed five-year budget. Men and women, young and middle-aged, dressed in blue jeans for the most part, shouted in a rhythmic cadence: "No to 40 percent for the military! No to only 20 percent for health! No to only 20 percent for education! No to the foreign debt!"

Hundreds of banners with similar messages were carried by nurses, doctors, medical school faculty members, teachers, high-school and university students and a variety of trade unionists. As this "mobilization" (as Uruguayans refer to mass demonstrations), some 75,000 strong, moved toward the Chamber of Deputies several blocks away, the narrow, canyonlike streets echoed with earsplitting demands for a return to normal living conditions and higher wages. When traffic at the cross streets became snarled, it was unsnarled by the marchers themselves. No police were in sight. A marcher explained: "At this time in our history, in this crowd, the police wouldn't dare show up in uniform. But I'm sure there are plenty of those rats around here in civilian clothes. Don't forget, the military are still with us."

The scene summed up Uruguay today: a feisty people clamoring for a return to the social welfare state and demanding redress for the horrors they suffered for twelve years under a fascist dictatorship, but also aware that the 27 generals, 200 colonels and 70,000 soldiers who held them captive remain in place, their weapons ready.

Some here still find the outburst of trade unionism and political demonstrations hard to believe. Only a year and a half ago a work stoppage or even a murmur of protest against the military would have led to jailings or disappearances. It was in August 1984 that the generals, confronted by a solid wall of opposition ranging from the establishment Colorado and Blanco parties to outlawed leftist groups and trade unions, withdrew to the barracks and allowed the transition to democracy to take place. The decision was not made overnight, however. On-and-off negotiations to end military rule began soon after the armed forces suffered a humiliating rebuff in a 1980 plebiscite on a Constitution that would have allowed the dictatorship to continue in power indefinitely. The drift to democracy in neighboring Argentina and Brazil also helped influence the generals' change of heart, and in 1984 a nationwide strike that threw the country into total paralysis accelerated the talks. In November 1984 elections were held, and last March Julio Maria Sanguinetti of the Colorado Party was inaugurated as the nation's first democratically chosen President in thirteen years.

The people's chief concern now lies in preventing the military's comeback while the country struggles to overcome the economic chaos and social disarray it left behind. There is strong popular sentiment for bringing to justice the military men of all ranks who tortured or murdered political prisoners. The faster such trials get under way, many Uruguayans believe, the more damaging the blow to the armed forces' morale, thereby frustrating their hopes for a return to power. Others, including President Sanguinetti, prefer not to ruffle the feathers of the military establishment. Hence his allocation of 40 percent of the proposed budget to the armed forces. Hence his interview last November with *Le Monde*, in which he advocated a general amnesty for the military.

Sanguinetti's situation vis-à-vis the armed forces is obviously a delicate one, but soon it may become critical. The Supreme Court must decide whether the accused military men should be tried by military courts, as demanded by the generals, or by civil courts. If it bows to the generals, the status of the military would be greatly reinforced and that of the President, as the country's chief magistrate, dramatically weakened. But if the judges favor the pre-eminence of the civil courts, Uruguay could be thrown into a crisis the outcome of which few want to predict. Some observers believe that Sanguinetti favors amnesty as a way of nipping the issue in the bud.

For Uruguay's 3 million inhabitants, the savagery of the military is not merely a haunting memory. They see their torturers walking about scot-free in the streets of the nation's capital. One out of every fifty citizens was arrested at one time or another during the dictatorship. Uruguay had the dubious distinction of having the highest number of prisoners per capita in Latin America. Police and soldiers broke into homes and snatched people away to interrogation centers. There they were beaten; tortured with electrodes to their genitals, temple or mouth; hung by their hands or knees from a horizontal bar for days at a time; and forced to put their head into a pail of water mixed with urine and vomit. Women were raped in the presence of their husband or children.

The dictatorship did violence to the nation's economy as well. Uruguay is virtually bankrupt. There is massive unemployment, a sharply falling standard of living and a staggering foreign debt. Even before the coup of 1973,

Samuel Chavkin visited Uruguay and other Latin American countries recently. He is the author of Storm Over Chile: The Junta Under Siege *(Lawrence Hill).*

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which ushered in the military dictatorship, Uruguay's economy was going downhill, but the country was still well fed, sharing Argentina's fame for plentiful livestock and succulent steaks. Now a sizable section of the population goes hungry. Youngsters besiege entrances to restaurants, begging for money or a slice of bread. When the military took over, Uruguay's foreign debt approached $1 billion. Today it is at least five times that amount, with little assurance that the nation can pay the interest, let alone repay the principal.

Throughout Montevideo, huge unfinished buildings stand as accusatory witnesses to the dictatorship's mismanagement and speculative ventures. On the Rambla Drive along Río de la Plata, toward the fashionable Carrasco area, are rows of abandoned high-rise apartment buildings whose owners couldn't meet the mortgage payments. The real estate fiasco is even more dramatic at Punto del Este, the seaside resort frequented by wealthy Argentines, where great mansions and multimillion-dollar hotels sit empty. The get-rich-quick dreams foundered, especially when the Argentine economy hit bottom in the wake of the war over the Falkland Islands. Reagan-inspired monetarist policies, overvalued exchange rates and high interest rates contributed to Uruguay's economic collapse.

Built into the real estate shenanigans and shady undertakings involving large loans from foreign banks and the International Monetary Fund were monumental payoffs to officials. Many high-ranking military officers, in complicity with civilian entrepreneurs, siphoned off hundreds of millions of dollars into private bank accounts in Switzerland, the United States and other countries. Now, as a well-connected economist who prefers to remain anonymous put it, "an angry citizenry is saddled with the responsibility of paying off the debts from a looted treasury."

Uruguay's history is unique in Latin America. For more than a century it was governed democratically by means of a convoluted symbiotic arrangement between the Colorado Party, which generally reflected urban interests, and the Blanco Party, which was traditionally conservative and represented the interests of the 350 land-owning families that still dominate the rich agricultural regions. The population is overwhelmingly European, made up of descendants of the Spanish settlers whose numbers were later augmented by a massive influx of Italians and a sprinkling of Slavic and Jewish immigrants. Many of the newer arrivals held progressive views and helped enact legislation to improve working conditions, public education and health care. The government provided free schooling through the university level, and the literacy rate rose steadily, reaching 90 percent. Health care improved and Uruguay's infant mortality rate was among the lowest in Latin America.

Today, according to Dr. Hugo Villar, who supervises the country's public health operations, infant mortality is about 50 per 1,000 births in the slum areas. Widespread malnutrition has made children susceptible to ailments never before known in Uruguay except as textbook cases. The dictatorship, Villar charges, "deliberately eroded the quality of the public health services and encouraged privatization of medical care." The public health hospitals are in terrible shape, he says; the food is substandard and essential medications are in short supply. Because of the government's retrenchment to meet the foreign debt payments, "there is no money with which to maintain adequate personnel," Villar points out. "At the same time there are about a thousand well-trained doctors looking for any kind of work."

Labor Minister Hugo Fernández Faingold estimates that 13.5 percent of Uruguay's workers have no jobs, and an additional 10 percent are underemployed. (Over the past decade, because of the economic crunch and the political repression, some 450,000 people, nearly one-sixth of the population, left the country to seek work or to flee persecution.) Fernández is proud that the new government has controlled inflation while letting wage increases keep pace with the cost of living. "I don't know of any country," he says, "where such parallelism has been so strictly observed." José D'Elía, president of the national confederation of labor unions, concedes this accomplishment, but notes that "during the dictatorship real wages dropped by 50 to 60 percent, so that the recent salary increases of 18 percent scarcely make up for the loss." People earning the minimum annual wage of $900 find it almost impossible to survive, he says. Like Villar, D'Elía blames the foreign debt, "which intrudes into every aspect of our lives."

Disagreement on what course to take in dealing with the military and resolving the economic crisis appears to be splitting the fragile political unity of the various groups that opposed the dictatorship and made the transition to democracy possible. The Colorado Party under Sanguinetti is veering to the right, looking for solutions that will be acceptable to the international banking community and the Reagan Administration. The party seeks to attract new loans and foreign investors by putting demands for higher wages on hold and by cutting back on state-supported social services. The infusion of new capital, the Colorados believe, will rehabilitate and streamline industries involved in the output of basic export commodities such as livestock products, wool, textiles and leatherware—for which there has been a shrinking and increasingly competitive world market since the mid-1950s.

Washington has already signaled the Sanguinetti government that it is ready to extend a helping hand via the Baker plan, the much-advertised brainchild of Treasury Secretary James A. Baker, presented at the World Bank's meeting in Seoul last October. It would make available a total of $29 billion in loans to fifteen heavily indebted countries. Assistant Secretary of the Treasury David Mulford spelled out the conditions when he visited Uruguay in November. As characterized by much of the local press, his overall message here was, "Shape up." He directed the country to attain "stability" by adhering to the principles of Reaganomics. First, Uruguay should become a free port. Second, the government should reduce its role in the economy by slashing subsidies to hard-pressed or developing industries and by selling to private companies the public utilities and state-owned enterprises, such as oil refinery

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plants and railroads. Finally, to stimulate foreign investment Uruguay should annul the Calvo Clause, freeing foreign companies doing business on Uruguayan territory from jurisdiction of the local courts when disputes arise.

No sooner had Mulford (dubbed Reagan's viceroy by the press) spoken than a storm of criticism was unleashed by members of parliament and in the press. They attacked the Sanguinetti government for its sympathetic response to Mulford, saying it was ready to sell Uruguay's sovereignty to the United States. Even members of the Blanco Party, which is steering a centrist course, viewed the plan with apprehension. Typical was this statement of a Blanco deputy: "Uruguay, under no circumstances, should accept a policy that would allow a foreign country to dictate our behavior with regard to domestic or foreign trade. We should reject the proposal in toto."

The most vehement attack came from Uruguay's third-largest party, the Frente Amplio, or Broad Front, a coalition of Communists, Socialists and Christian Democrats. The front came together in the early 1970s, and despite the murder of many of its leaders in that decade, it has snapped back, polling more than 20 percent in the presidential election of November 1984.

Oscar Bottinelli, a top official of Frente Amplio, sees the Baker plan as yet another means of increasing Uruguay's foreign debt obligations, thereby threatening the transition to democracy. "We've had experience with loans for many years, and where did it get us?" he asks. Most of the money went into speculative ventures rather than productive enterprises. "It was also lent at usurious interest rates to industrialists, many of whom began to go bankrupt because the dictatorship lifted tariff protections and allowed more cheaply made goods to invade Uruguay." In turn, Uruguayan banks closed their doors because they were unable to collect the outstanding loans and were taken over by foreign banks. "Of twenty-two banks originally owned by Uruguayans," Bottinelli says, "only two remain in Uruguayan hands."

The people need jobs and economic security, he says, and the government must play a greater role in achieving those goals, not a lesser one, as the Baker plan demands. For Frente Amplio the country's future depends on a basic reorientation of its economic policy. The focus, its leaders say, should be on creating a domestic market for Uruguay's products, which are at a competitive disadvantage in the world market. With substantial wage hikes, Bottinelli predicts, demand for what Uruguay produces would increase significantly. That, in turn, would lead to ever greater employment and stability.

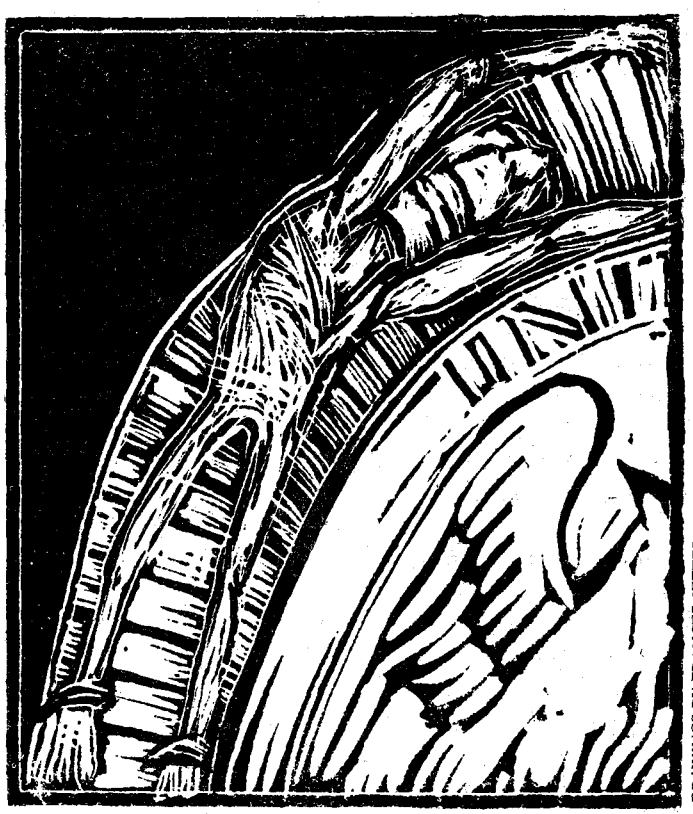
Some Uruguayans fear that unless living conditions improve measurably, workers and the authorities will collide. The armed forces might be called in to restore "law and order" and, as a result, return the country to military rule.

There is also uneasiness about the role of the United States. Uruguayans wonder if Washington will be content to stand aside, as protests against the foreign debt intensify. The walls of most of the buildings in the center of Montevideo, as well as in the slum areas, are plastered with posters declaring, "Save Our Country, Do Not Pay The Foreign Debt." The foreign debt—*la deuda externa*—is discussed by taxicab drivers and waitresses, at trade union meetings, in the press and on the radio.

Across the Andes, just four hours away by plane, Peruvian President Alan García Pérez has denounced the policies of the I.M.F., saying his government will limit its interest payments to 10 percent of its export earnings. The Uruguayan debt does not threaten the American banking community, but if the country should follow Peru's lead, the people of Argentina and Brazil, the two biggest debtor nations in South America, will be watching. Uruguay is not only a geographic link between those two nations; they also respect its cultural integrity.

There may be other annoyances for Washington. Last November, Uruguay restored diplomatic relations with Cuba. The bookshops and kiosks are jammed with paperbacks from Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua and Eastern Europe, many of which criticize U.S. policies in Latin America. Most of Montevideo's half-dozen daily newspapers are centrist or even rightist, like *La Mañana*, but there is alsó the Communist *La Hora* and a handful of news weeklies, most of them with anti-establishment views. Montevideo is alive with meetings in solidarity with the Sandinistas and with the opponents of the Chilean and Paraguayan dictatorships. The city has become a center for international human rights conferences.

Many remember Washington's cooperation with the military here, especially its support for the regime in the bloody confrontations with the Tupamaro guerrilla movement in the late 1960s and 1970s. Despite legislation passed during the Carter years to ban loans and weapons sales to governments guilty of human rights violations, President



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Reagan approved a World Bank loan of $50 million to Uruguay in 1981. Soon after, the United States began selling military hardware to the armed forces through indirect channels from South Korea. And by 1983 funds were made available to resume training of the Uruguayan armed forces.

Why the weapons sales and the military training? Uruguay has not had a war with Argentina since 1851; it has been at peace with Brazil since 1865. An important Uruguayan politician, who prefers not to be identified, says that people know the answer "from bitter experience." But for the moment, he adds, they would rather dwell on what little pleasure can be derived from their recently acquired freedom. □

SHOREHAM EVACUATION PLAN

Staging Lilco's Nuclear Follies

KARL GROSSMAN

On February 13 the Administration of the actor-President produced an extraordinary drama. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a test to see if the area around Long Island Lighting Company's unpopular nuclear power plant at Shoreham, New York, could be safely evacuated. State and local officials refused to participate, so their parts were taken by stand-ins provided by the Los Angeles consulting firm Theodore Barry and Associates. Samuel Speck, FEMA associate director, denied charges by Suffolk County and other Shoreham opponents that a staged test didn't prove anything about the plant's safety. Evacuation drills, he explained, are "not meant to disrupt the public's normal routine."

The premise for the Shoreham drama came from a regulation promulgated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the wake of the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island. All new nuclear plants must have locally developed evacuation plans before they can receive a license to operate.

At Three Mile Island, as at most other nuclear power plants, people could escape in many directions in the event of a serious accident. But Long Island would be impossible to evacuate, according to a $650,000 study conducted by Suffolk County. Long Island's only direct links to the mainland are the crowded tunnels and bridges at its western end. Its main road, the six-lane east-west Long Island Expressway, usually lives up to comedians' description of it as the world's longest parking lot.

If there was a major accident at Shoreham, near the center of the island, people who live east of the plant would have the choice of driving into the ocean or the radioactivi-

Karl Grossman's Power Crazy: How the Long Island Lighting Company Became America's Biggest Utilities Scandal, *will be published by Grove Press in June.*

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ty. Those to the west would enter a traffic jam of epic proportions. Highways all over the island, the county's study showed, would be hopelessly snarled.

For that reason both Suffolk County and New York State have refused to propose an evacuation plan for Shoreham. So the company, commonly known as Lilco, drew up its own plan and thought to test it with its own employees. The state and county challenged the plan, and the State Supreme Court ruled it an illegal usurpation of the police powers of local government. "Lilco has to realize," declared Justice William Geiler, "that this is a government of law and not of men or private corporations." Two licensing boards of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission also called the plan illegal. After the court defeat, FEMA and Lilco came up with the idea of using stand-ins.

Last November the commission approved the test, under pressure from the Reagan Administration (former Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger has been paid $20,000 a month to pull strings in Washington for Lilco). The vote was not surprising, considering some of the commissioners' backgrounds. Thomas M. Roberts had been chief executive officer and president of Southern Boiler Tank Works, which produces boilers for nuclear plants. Adm. Lando Zech had been in the nuclear Navy until his retirement, in 1983. Frederick Bernthal had served as an aide to Senator Howard Baker and had been best known on the Hill as a promoter of the Clinch River Breeder Reactor. And commission chair Nunzio Palladino, who voted against the test, was for twenty years a nuclear engineer at Westinghouse, the principal manufacturer of nuclear plants in the United States. In July, Zech will replace Palladino as chair.

Outside the halls of the commission Shoreham has many enemies. A *Newsday* poll in November found 77 percent of Suffolk County residents opposed to opening the plant. Anti-Shoreham candidates have won in most recent local elections; and Suffolk County's legislators, all the Democrats and all but one Republican, are against the plant, as is New York Governor Mario Cuomo. Thus, Lilco's multimillion-dollar attempts to alter public opinion have failed, despite the efforts of New York City media guru David Garth and Winner/Wagner, the California public relations firm that specializes in defeating antinuclear referendums.

The House Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power, which has been investigating the proposed licensing of Shoreham since January 1985, has unearthed Nuclear Regulatory Commission memorandums showing that high-level officials in the Reagan Administration had hoped the evacuation test would overcome the last obstacle to a license for Shoreham and would deal a decisive blow to the opponents of nuclear power. "The Shoreham plant must open!" Energy Secretary John S. Herrington declared last year. "If it doesn't, the signals will be the low point in this [nuclear] industry's history. If it does, we are going to begin a brand new era." The subcommittee's chair, Representative Edward Markey of Massachusetts, noted the irony of an Administration that claims to support state's rights imposing a plan that the state and local governments reject.

The county legislature sent a letter to the President asking him to block the test and reminding him that in 1984 he had pledged, "This Administration does not favor the imposition of Federal government authority over the objections of state and local governments in matters involving the adequacy of an emergency evacuation plan or a nuclear power plant such as Shoreham." The letter was reprinted as a full-page advertisement in *The Washington Post*, with the headline, "Mr. President. We're Counting on You." New York Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Alfonse D'Amato appealed to the White House to stop the drill. And Suffolk County passed a law making it illegal for anyone to "perform or simulate Suffolk County roles of government functions" in an emergency-plan test without legislative approval. Lilco challenged the law in court and was backed by the Justice Department, which accused Suffolk County of "violating the supremacy of the United States of America." Three days before the planned drill U.S. District Court Judge Leonard Wexler issued an injunction barring imposition of the law, ruling that "Suffolk County has impermissibly intruded into the sphere of authority reserved exclusively to the Federal government by Congress." So on with the show. □

ZIMBABWE UNDER PRETORIA'S GUNS

Mugabe Moves to One-Party Rule

DAVID CAUTE

Zimbabwe's fate has hinged on South African calculations since independence, in 1980. The Pretoria regime has already demonstrated its capacity to destabilize the black front-line states, not only Angola but also Mozambique, Zimbabwe's ally and eastern neighbor. South Africa has displayed its military muscle—only a fraction of the force it could unleash in an emergency—by financing and arming the insurgent movements Unita in Angola and Renamo in Mozambique; by intervening directly in Angola; and by ordering commando raids on Maputo and on Gaborone, the capitals of Mozambique and Botswana, respectively.

Pretoria has hitherto carefully limited its interventions against Zimbabwe, applying sufficient military pressure to tie down an estimated 10,000 Zimbabwean troops guarding the Mutare-Beira oil pipeline and railway link through Mozambique, and supplying arms to the murderous dissident group Super Zapu, operating in Zimbabwe's western regions, Matabeleland and the Midlands. This dual strategy has forced Harare to make crippling military expenditures, resulting in the curtailment of vital social and economic programs, notably land reform. It has sent a warning signal to

David Caute is the author of Under the Skin: The Death of White Rhodesia *(Northwestern University Press).*

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Prime Minister Robert Mugabe and a comforting message to South Africa's beleaguered whites: black majority rule means poverty and chaos.

Zimbabwe has been spared the full South African onslaught for two main reasons. Mugabe has prudently refused to allow the African National Congress (A.N.C.) to establish military bases within his borders; and Zimbabwe continues to enjoy a special relationship with Britain, exemplified by the British Military Assistance for Technical Training program (BMATT).

Recent developments, however, cast doubt on the durability of this tacit standoff. White South African farmers and their families living close to the Zimbabwean border in the Northern Transvaal have been injured by land mines planted along the dirt roads of their farms—the method used against Rhodesian farmers in the 1970s by the guerrilla groups put into the field by Zanu and Zapu. Pretoria has blamed Zimbabwe and threatened to conduct hot pursuit across the border.

Nevertheless, Mugabe has committed himself to impose full-scale economic sanctions on Pretoria, despite active opposition from Britain and howls of alarm from the white-dominated business and banking sectors in Harare. Mugabe's commitment is conditional on Western cooperation, including compensation for Zimbabwe's inevitable economic crisis should the South Africans close the rail and road links that accommodate almost 80 percent of Zimbabwe's trade; but it has encouraged the South Africans to raise the temperature in Matabeleland, where killings by dissidents have recently gathered a new, sinister momentum.

The other grim consequence of South African destabilization has been the rapid erosion of civil liberties in Zimbabwe and the mounting pressure for a one-party state. Unity talks between the ruling party, Zanu (PF), which won sixty-four of the eighty black parliamentary seats in last July's general election, and Joshua Nkomo's battered Zapu, reduced to fifteen seats, all of them in Matabeleland, have been proceeding rather fitfully for several months [see Caute, "Mugabe Brooks No Opposition," *The Nation*, August 31, 1985]. What carrots Mugabe may be offering at the negotiating table are not known, but the stick he wields in his other hand is all too visible. The shape and size of that stick is the subject of this report.

A depressing feature of violent decolonization is that the liberation forces tend to adopt tactics and attitudes that mirror the oppressor's, as if the rationale of repression had transplanted itself in the victim. The emergency powers extended every six months by the Mugabe government are essentially those deployed by the regime of Ian Smith from 1965 to 1979, under which Mugabe himself suffered a decade of imprisonment. Nationalist leaders who were detained without trial by a colonial regime have freely resorted to the same repressive measures against their political opponents, including many who fought in the war of liberation. Emmerson Munangagwa, Minister of State Security, proudly tells visitors that he was suspended upside down from meat hooks and beaten by the white Special Branch officers he now employs in the Central Intelligence Organization (C.I.O.).

Zanu (PF), which was banned from legitimate political activity under the Smith regime, has used police and administrative powers to put opposition parties out of business. Power is power; if you have it, you keep it—as was frankly explained to me by Obert Mpofu, a senior collector in Customs and Excise, who stood as a Zanu (PF) candidate in his native Matabeleland. Mpofu is fat, soft and easygoing. He walks at a turtle's pace. "Here in Africa," he told me, "our populace is not politically educated. To them the kind of democracy you're talking about, Western democracy, is anathema. What they understand is that government is power. Only a few elites can understand opposition. Once you're in power in Africa, you're in power forever." That argument turns truth on its head. It is the elite themselves who codify the rules; yet in the elections the poor, partly illiterate population of Hwange-Tsholotsho sent Mpofu back to Customs and Excise. He received only 5,926 votes against 29,538 for his much-harassed Zapu opponent.

Mugabe's reaction to the Ndebele tribe's refusal to bend and vote for his party was to crack down even harder. The Ndebele voted for Zapu despite the brutal military "pacification" of 1983, the ruthless Youth Brigade recruiting campaigns of 1984 and the constant stream of arrests and disappearances of elected councilors and Zapu officials extending into 1985. Soon after the election results were declared, officially inspired riots took place in the townships of Harare, Bindura and Gweru, during which platoons of party women, luminous with power, ejected opposition supporters from their homes. Houses were burned, Zapu candidates were assaulted (one was killed, another seriously stabbed) and the police, as usual, did not intervene. A police chief may well be head of the local party Youth Brigade. In August some 150 Ndebele homes and maize stocks were burned at Sogwala-Silobela, a Zapu stronghold in the West Midlands, by Youth Brigades supported by the Special Constabulary. The style of that punitive operation, as of others allegedly undertaken in reprisal for the rising wave of murders of Zanu (PF) officials, was unequivocally tribal: almost all of the victims were Ndebeles.

Mugabe made his intentions clear when he replaced the moderate Minister of Home Affairs, Simbi Mubako, with the flamboyant, bullying Enos Nkala, the senior Ndebele in Zanu (PF). Nkala lost no time in unleashing his own Home Affairs political police, Police Internal Security and Intelligence (PISI), to compete with the C.I.O. By coincidence, *pisi* means "jackal" in the Sindebele language.

Last July, before Nkala's promotion, I watched him running for the National Assembly for the Insiza constituency of southern Matabeleland, where, despite ruthless deployment of police and state-owned transport on his behalf, he suffered a humiliating defeat: 3,392 votes, against 27,804 for his Zapu opponent, who dared not sleep two successive nights in the same house. (Nkala was later elected for the Kariba constituency.) I visited an economic enterprise where the predominantly Ndebele management and work force were

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in such fear of Nkala, his Youth Brigade and beatings by the police that I am unable to name the enterprise or even characterize it for fear that it will be visited with reprisal.

Once installed as minister, Nkala announced that he intended to "wipe out" Zapu. He told the Senate, "I'll lock up more M.P.s, and the leader [Nkomo] himself." So far, he has locked up Nkomo's staff, leaving the old man alone and unprotected.

Seven out of fifteen elected Zapu M.P.s have been detained. Two were soon released, and five were held without charge or trial. Of those, Stephen Nkomo, brother of Joshua Nkomo, was released earlier this month; two others, Edward Ndlovu and Sidney Malunga, were charged at the end of January with conspiring to overthrow the government at meetings in Joshua Nkomo's Harare home. William Kona, a member of Zapu's national executive committee, is also charged in the conspiracy. Nkomo has interpreted this move as an attempt to sabotage the interparty unity talks.

Kembo Mohadi, who represents Beitbridge, was arrested in September and has not been seen since; at last report his lawyer still had not been allowed to see him. Scores of Zapu officials and supporters, including Bulawayo City Councilors, languish in prison and many have disappeared. Nevison Nyashanu, defeated Zapu candidate for Harare, was arrested on August 14. An employee of the Public Service Commission, he reportedly had failed to apply for permission to stand for Parliament, a breach of administrative regulations but not a crime. Nyashanu, who is being held without charge, was adopted by Amnesty International as a "prisoner of conscience" under the Smith regime.

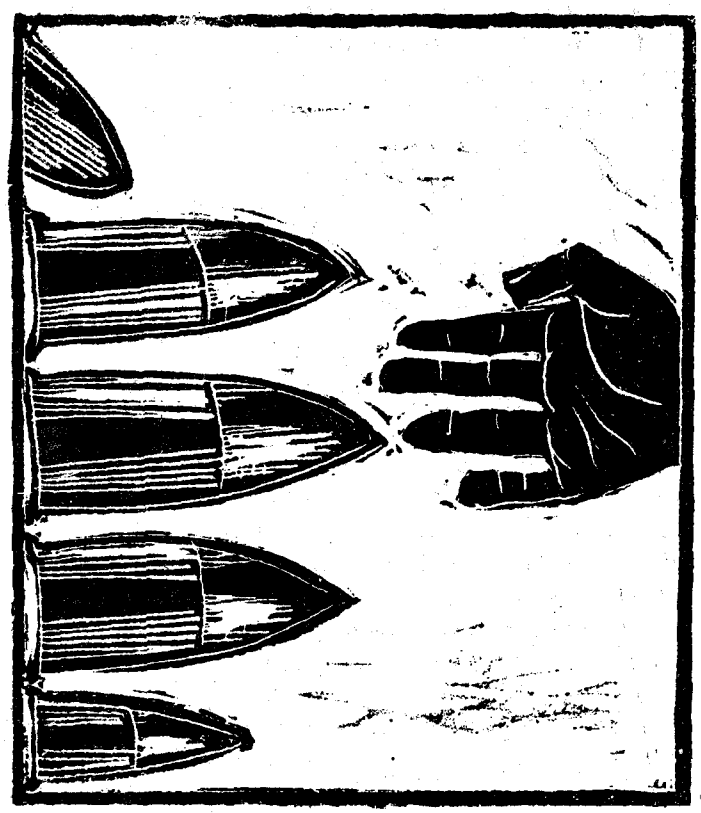
Vote Moyo, an M.P. and national organizing secretary of Zapu when arrested in June 1982, has the dubious honor of having twice been declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty. He was incarcerated almost continuously from 1965 until 1980. On August 8, Report Mphoko, deputy head of the demobilization directorate, was arrested. George Marange, a member of Zapu's executive committee, has been held since November 1984, despite high blood pressure and despite having spent fourteen years in prison under Smith and nine months under Mugabe previously. Not all detainees belong to Zapu. Phineas Sithole, a veteran trade unionist loyal to the rump party Zanu, has also been held since November 1984. Last March fifteen trade unionists, most of them members of the ruling party and genuine socialists, were arrested for resisting the corporatist legislation introduced by Minister of Labor Fred Shava. No charges have been brought. Also locked up is Lot Dewa, an Ndebele headmaster of a school in Filabusi, who was detained under Smith in 1966, 1967 and 1972. Subsequently elected a member of the Rhodesian House of Assembly, he was an outspoken opponent of the Rhodesian Front, whose military atrocities he documented.

After four months in the job, Nkala encountered the minor inconvenience of a report by Amnesty International, published November 13, which accused the government of torturing political prisoners in Bulawayo's notorious Stops Camp and other named detention centers. Amnesty's report, based on the testimony of informants who dare not be quoted, confirms the systematic use of torture, including beatings, electric shocks and, much favored, the near-suffocation of the victim by immersion in a canvas bag full of water. The purpose is usually to extract a confession of having assisted armed dissidents, but I heard of an entire extended family being subjected to physical maltreatment because one of its members had evaded arrest.

After the arrest takes place, normally at 4 or 5 A.M., relatives and lawyers experience protracted delays in locating the victim. This is the case even for families of M.P.s like Edward Ndlovu, who suffers from diabetes and angina. The difficulties faced by members of the Ndebele peasantry are far worse. Their unavailing treks from one police or army camp to the next in search of a relative finally induce wary resignation underscored by hatred.

The documentation in Amnesty's report was ignored in the Zimbabwean press, which confined itself to carrying Enos Nkala's denials, his absurd challenge to Amnesty to produce the victims and his smears of the organization as the dupe of a small group of Zapu exiles. Mugabe, who called the report a pack of lies and referred to "Amnesty Lies International," told the House of Assembly that he himself had not received "any representations" from Amnesty. In fact, he had received a long telex from its London office on October 25. The Mugabe government, like other governments, is not enthusiastic about inquiries into its injustices. Its own two commissions of inquiry, in 1983 and 1984, into alleged atrocities in Matabeleland have either not submitted their reports or have had their findings suppressed.

Among those detained in Zimbabwe are two heroes of the war of liberation, Dumiso Dabengwa and Lookout Masuku (both acquitted of all charges by the High Court but, nonetheless, held in Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison since



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February 1982). Successive purges have decimated the ranks of the former Zipra commanders who became officers in the National Army after independence. The latest purge, last fall, hit an estimated forty officers, including Colin Moyo, commander of the School of Infantry at Mbalabala (subsequently released); Maflesto Sebatu, commander of the Military Police Training School; Rodwell Nyika, second in command of the Battle Battalion at Nyanga; Brig. Kindness Ndlovu; and Col. Joseph Dube, commandant at Inkomo Barracks. The last two are among four officers formally charged with participating in the previously mentioned conspiracy to overthrow the government. The others are Brig. Charles Gray, head of Army Operations, and Brig. Tshile Nleya, commander of four brigades.

The British, meanwhile, persevere with the BMATT program, claiming, with some justification, that since the notorious Fifth Brigade came into contact with the Sandhurst ethic, its behavior has improved. The British have been more active in lobbying against Mugabe's proposed sanctions against South Africa than in protesting the successive waves of repression. As long as Mugabe maintains a "mixed economy," remains nonaligned and gains in international stature, London will count its blessings and senior Foreign Office representatives will plead noninterference in Zimbabwe's internal affairs, adding, as one told me, "We think reports in the British press and TV programs like *Panorama* are more effective."

The nascent one-party state sells itself in a bewildering variety of colors and costumes. According to Didymus Mutasa, Speaker of the House of Assembly and once an Amnesty prisoner of conscience, the single party represents a peculiarly African symbiosis of Marxism and traditional obedience to the chief. (Nkrumah and Sekou Touré used to speak of "communalism," a useful phrase in a university seminar but nowhere else.) Eddison Zvobgo, the brash but clever Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, promises that the single party will "subordinate the interests of the individual to those of society" but will avoid authoritarianism by providing for "collective decision-making in government." Herbert Ushewokunze promotes the one-party state as an instrument in the struggle between national and international capital, class struggle being alien to Zimbabwean society. Minister of Labor Shava adds a nice twist of his own: since Zapu is in basic agreement with Zanu (PF) on all major policies, there is no point in legalizing a phony opposition.

The serious question, of course, is whether a single party could reconcile the minority Ndebele tribe to the dominant Shonas. Although not tribal in origin, over time Zapu has become totally associated with the Ndebele's claim to a distinctive identity and its resistance to Shona domination. (An Ndebele constable on the streets of Bulawayo gives directions in Shona unless you are white; the Zanu (PF) party cards, which the Youth Brigades have been forcing on the Ndebeles, are printed in Shona and English.) Tribalism, like European subnationalism, may be a retrograde emotion, and progressive historians may play ostrich by dismissing "tribe" itself as an artificial category whipped up by divide-and-rule imperialists; nevertheless, tribal identity dominates Zimbabwean political loyalties, while civil service appointments are increasingly interpreted in terms of rivalries within the Shona subtribes: Zezuru, Karanga, Korekore and Manyika.

The basis of democratic politics is whatever moves men and women, not what ought to move them. If the present talks between Zanu (PF) and Zapu result in a paper unity, a redistribution of the administrative spoils, then the old, tired, battered leadership of Zapu will lose credibility in Matabeleland and the number of murders perpetrated by the dissidents will wax rather than wane. After all, Zapu's winning of every parliamentary seat in Matabeleland was a demonstration of popular opposition to Zanu (PF)'s policy of winning Ndebele hearts and minds through the barrel of a gun. What Zimbabwe needs is what it possessed during 1980, a popular coalition government, dominated by Zanu (PF) but offering genuine partnership to the Ndebeles. That would be the scenario most indigestible to Pretoria. The one-party state, on the other hand—with its inevitable censorship, leader cult and emasculation of the legislature and the judiciary—will suit P.W. Botha quite nicely. □

Democrats

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

that unions encourage the party to espouse are unpopular and unsound.

If those claims were correct, then even a revitalized labor movement would be of dubious value to the Democrats. But they're wrong. Since 1964, in every election year but two (1972 and 1980) union households have voted for the Democratic Presidential nominee at a rate 12 percent higher than that of the general electorate. And although organized labor increasingly comprises minority groups and women, who tend to vote Democratic in higher percentages anyway, the figures indicate that white male unionists remain a Democratic constituency. In 1984, 20 percent more white unionists voted Democratic than white nonunionists. That is not to say the vote of those union members gave Democrats cause for elation. They backed Walter Mondale by only 50 percent, to 49 percent for Reagan, according to a CBS/*New York Times* exit poll. Nonmembers voted 69 percent for Reagan, 30 percent for Mondale. But in the context of a general collapse of white support for national Democrats, a 20 percent margin is considerable. Indeed, what stands out in the new data from the exit polls is the opposition to Reagan in the unionized segments of those constituencies that swung most heavily toward Reagan in 1984. Among nonunionized Southern white males 77 percent voted for Reagan, 23 percent for Mondale. The 11 percent who are unionized voted 50 percent for Mondale, 49 percent for Reagan.

Harold Meyerson is a Los Angeles-based political consultant and a member of the National Executive Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America.

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Close examination of the 1984 data shows the proportion of union members to have been a crucial, if frequently hidden, factor in the voting. Mondale received the votes of 45 percent of blue-collar workers, 40 percent of white-collar workers and 37 percent of professionals. But among blue-collar unionists, white-collar unionists and unionized professionals, he received 56 percent, 56 percent and 54 percent of the vote, respectively. The class and "collar" differences correlate with the degree of unionization. As Mondale's overall share of votes declines from blue-collar to white-collar to professional, so does the rate of unionization—from 37 percent to 14 percent to 11 percent in the CBS/*New York Times* poll. White collar or blue, old collar or new, union membership matters.

The electoral stumbling block for the Democrats, then, is less the declining level of support for Democratic candidates among unionists than it is the declining level of unionization per se. Mondale's vote would have increased by 4 percent if the rate of unionization in 1984 had been equal to its postwar high. The drop in unionization also helps explain how the relatively united Democratic Party of 1984 fared no better than the bitterly divided Democratic Party of 1968 and 1972: what remained to be united had shrunk considerably.

Deunionization keeps the Democrats from regaining power in an even more pernicious way. It inhibits them from generating a politically viable and just solution to the problems of slow growth and international competition. A number of unions—notably, the United Automobile Workers and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers—have developed plans for publicly controlled investment funds and increased worker control of corporate policy. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. views full employment as the key to successful economic reconstruction. Yet those positions either have not entered or have been banished from the Democratic Party's agenda.

The much-lamented themelessness of the Mondale campaign resulted from a profound stalemate in the party between the defenders of the market and the proponents of government intervention, between those favoring growth and those seeking equity. As long as the economy was growing, American liberalism could live with both. By 1984, however, that was no longer possible. At the Democratic National Convention, Gary Hart spoke of encouraging private enterprise and Jesse Jackson talked about renewing public sector programs for the poor; Mondale proposed no plan for generating growth. During the three-month campaign the Democrats suffered a steady decline in support because their candidate failed to convince the voters that he could keep the nation prosperous.

Anyone who doubts that Mondale's silence or that of the party's center was rooted in an inability to choose between the pro-market and pro-government factions should read the postmortem on the campaign by William Galston, Mondale's issues director, in the Winter 1985 issue of *The Brookings Review*. "The Democratic Party . . . has no guiding idea," he states. "It cannot, in current circumstances, stand for more government. It cannot, without losing its distinctiveness and integrity, stand for less government." Galston rejects the notion that government programs can engender prosperity. Some contend, he says, that a program of "full employment policies; job security; help for struggling family farmers; effective responses to unfair international competition, can help reunite the working class and agriculture with the disadvantaged to fashion a new populist alliance. [But this] overlooks most of the forces that have driven the lower middle class away from the Democratic Party. . . . [and] it would position the party against the forces of economic change."

Are Galston's assessments correct? Proposals to aid family farmers and protect U.S. industries from foreign competition have won wide public support. Polls commissioned by the A.F.L.-C.I.O. have shown that a substantial number of Democrats who voted for Reagan favor government action to guarantee full employment. In a survey of Michigan voters, white Democrats who chose Reagan in 1984 complained that Democratic Administrations had neglected them by not providing worker retraining programs, by not shielding American industry from world competition and by not institutionalizing a truly progressive tax system. And as Thomas Edsall of *The Washington Post* has documented, the decisive factor in the party's decline among white workers came in the late 1970s, when the Carter White House and the Democratic Congress backed away from full-employment legislation, national health insurance and tax reform.

What of Galston's other contention, that government intervention to promote prosperity is bad economics in general and bad politics the farther you get from the Rust Belt? In the current high-unemployment economy, piecemeal interventions probably do pit sector against sector and region against region. Here the Democrats need to take a lesson from the Reagan Republicans: a minimal program doesn't sell nearly as well as

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a maximal one. The ambitious 1978 Humphrey-Hawkins full-employment bill offers the only way to reconcile the party's Rust Belt and Sun Belt, its Hart and Jackson and Mondale wings. As Robert Kuttner has demonstrated in *The Economic Illusion*, in the highly unionized Northern European social democracies full employment enables labor to support industrial innovation and arrests the downward spiral toward low-productivity service-sector jobs.

Democrats need to reframe the debate to show that growth and equity are complementary. This is in large part the responsibility of organized labor. In this battle, the party's foremost "special interest" can best articulate the general interest. Unions need to overcome their lack of confidence and resume their participation in the national political discourse. At the 1984 National Convention, although labor had 25 percent of all delegates and a virtual majority of the Mondale delegates, it acquiesced without protest to the first Democratic platform in forty years to ignore full employment. The New Directions conference to be held in May in Washington will provide one opportunity to redirect Democratic thinking. It will bring together leaders and activists from a number of unions with their counterparts in the Rainbow Coalition, the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Populist Caucus and others on the Democratic left.

Ultimately doctrine follows numbers. The disappearance of a discernible Democratic economics may be laid to the systematic underrepresentation of the poor in the electorate and the decline in the strength of unions. As a clear condition for a lasting Democratic resurgence, labor must organize—something most unions forgot how to do when the going was easy and can't quite remember how to do now that the going is tough. For its part, the party needs to commit itself much more seriously to voter registration and to rewriting labor law so that the workers who want to organize have an opportunity to do so. In the hindsight of 1984 election polls, the Democrats' failure to enact labor law reform in 1978 stands as an act of political suicide. At a minimum, the labor-baiting that periodically afflicts the party's neoliberal wing should cease. If Democratic leaders can't be brought to support labor out of allegiance to democratic principles, let them at least support labor out of concern for Democratic prospects. □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 194*)

idea that post-Copernican astronomy be taught alongside Ptolemaic astronomy. I know that he brings that up as an argument against me, but I see an opportunity where he sees a problem. In my opinion it would be sound scientific education to ask students to consider with an open mind those two world views, array the arguments for and against each, and then explain why they think one is to be preferred over the other. What Reed calls "refuted scientific theories" are, in my view, valuable ideas for teachers to use in helping students clarify the basis of belief and of belief systems.

Reed suggests that such inquiries are better done in history classes than science classes. In saying this, he implies that science be taught ahistorically. But I would argue that all subjects be taught from a historical perspective. I believe that is the most effective way to help students see that knowledge is a quest, not a commodity; that what we think we know comes out of what we once thought we knew; and that what we will know in the future may make hash of what we now believe.

I thank Raymond Scupin and Richard D. Erlich for helping to advance the idea that good science has nothing to fear from bad science and that good education will always promote a certain measure of disbelief, even about—especially about—what most people take to be certain. They would, I think, be interested in the essay George Orwell wrote about George Bernard Shaw's remark that we are more gullible and superstitious today than we were in the Middle Ages. Shaw offered as an example of modern credulity the widespread belief that the Earth is round. The average man, Shaw said, cannot advance a single reason for believing this. Orwell took Shaw's remark to heart and examined carefully his own reasons for believing the world to be round. He concluded that Shaw was right, that most of our scientific beliefs rest on the authority of scientists.

Finally, to John G. Papastavridis, may I add that I agree with Stephen Jay Gould that creation science must not be dismissed as a form of unreasoned stupidity. It is serious business, which is why we suggested that its claims be moved to an arena where they can be scrutinized by reasoned intelligence.

Neil Postman

Marc Postman is traveling and has had no opportunity to see the letters above.

POLITICAL BOSS

Berkeley, Calif.

"Sun City" is a song, an album, a video, a political pamphlet and a paperback book against apartheid, but it is also the creation of Little Steven Van Zandt, who conceived the idea of boycotting South Africa's Sun City and also wrote the song and produced the album. It is probably because of Little Steven's modesty that his name is left out, as in your editorial, when reference is made to his valuable contribution ["'Sun City' Rap," Dec. 21].

Little Steven is a name to be reckoned with. He co-produced and played guitar with Bruce Springsteen for seven years, until 1983, and has since produced some of the most political rock-and-roll in this country. His latest solo album, *Voice of America*, though not a commercial success, has been critically acclaimed and, like "Sun City," has been kept off the air for its hard-hitting social commentary. It's also great rock-and-roll.

"Sun City" has sold about 300,000 copies in the United States and 200,000 in Europe. While the wives of our politicians are busy taking sex out of rock, Little Steven is putting politics into it. In an age when people are trampling each other in an effort to abandon the liberal ship, it is refreshing to see somebody like Little Steven stand his ground and be so effective in the process.

Claude Steiner

'WHAT'S THE STORY?'

Minneapolis

Occasionally, as in the November 9 issue, a subliminal swastika has been glimmering from the pattern of black squares in the crossword puzzles. What's the story?

Jonathan Sisson

LEWIS REPLIES

Plymouth, Montserrat

Does my puzzle friend Jonathan Sisson think I have a sinister design? At least he will agree the swastika has been partially disarmed. From any point of view I think the pattern looks like I did the last time I tried to ice-skate. Obviously after almost forty years of "setting" the *Nation* puzzle, I still don't know which end is up. *Frank W. Lewis*

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Letters may be edited for reasons of space.

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Orders of Wisdom

BRINA CAPLAN

THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT AND OTHER CLINICAL TALES. *By Oliver Sacks. Summit. 233 pp. $15.95.*

Mostly, it doesn't matter that our physiology consists of cranky evolutionary compromises and is liable, like all overdesigned machinery, to glitches, discontinuities or outright breakdowns. We're jerry-built, but we're lucky: over time, lots of redundant function has been built into the works. Even that delicate system, the brain, has plenty of backup circuitry; so, usually, it's a wheeze or a thump, then everything's back in action. Sometimes, though, things go wrong in a big way. And when there is a major disorder in the mechanisms of the brain, more than our functional well-being is at risk. A personality does not rule the body like some *deus ex machina*; instead, selfhood inheres mysteriously in a physiology of fibers and cells, a biochemistry of charges and fluids. Disease processes in the brain threaten our ability to be ourselves—perhaps, to be any selves at all. The soul of the machine may recover from a neurological "event" only to find itself radically distorted or reduced to something alien, strangely enhanced or fatally lost.

How individuals respond to finding or losing themselves in the context of such crises has been neurologist Oliver Sacks's subject in three earlier books. In *Awakenings* he described patients who, lost for years in a Parkinsonian twilight, were suddenly reanimated by the drug L-Dopa; in *Migraine* he considered the peculiar nature of this affliction of saints and suburbanites; and in his autobiographical *A Leg to Stand On* he reported on his neurological convalescence after a mountain-climbing accident deadened all sensation in one leg. Now he's collected a variety of case histories and clinical vignettes under the title *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, once again presenting us with the profoundly creative yet disintegrative world of neuropathology. Sacks offers brief, orienting essays before taking us through four domains: Losses, Excesses, Transports and The World of the Simple. Within each domain, men and women struggle individually with a common problem: how to reconcile being both a faulty mechanism and a thematic, complex and enduring self.

Sacks tells stories. "We must deepen a case history to a narrative or tale," he says. "Only then do we have a 'who' as well as a 'what,' a real person . . . in relation to the physical." His stories concern not only his patients but also, in an informal way, the physicians of medical history—Dr. James Parkinson making clinical observations in the streets of eighteenth-century London, or Civil War physician Weir Mitchell puzzling over the way wounded soldiers experienced "phantom limbs." The evolution of neurology clearly delights Sacks. He expresses deep admiration for the rigorous, technical order brought to the field by the nineteenth-century neurologist Hughlings Jackson, whose work, incidentally, Freud also admired. At the same time, he has a case to make against classical, "Jacksonian" neurology, at least against its present-day application to patients. Give a person a neurological examination, he warns, and you're likely to wind up with no persona at all, just a list of functions and deficits. Too often, neurology ends in impersonal diagnostic disassembly. Yet neurological illness is the most deeply personal of experiences, challenging the patient's very identity.

The corrective, Sacks argues, is what his beloved mentor, Russian psychoneurologist A.R. Luria, called romantic science, a science which respects the meaningfulness of lived experience. Perhaps as body-machines we're as modular as Sonys, with identical interchangeable parts, but our lives have a thematic integrity that cannot be made uniform. One of Sacks's stories concerns two old women, both forced by cerebral strokes to hear and rehear unconsciously retained melodies. For one woman that meant a constant mind-numbing barrage of sound, but for the other, the loud music called to mind the joy of being a small child in the arms of her singing mother. This involuntary memory reassured her about a loving childhood, which in old age she doubted had been hers. "Biologically, physiologically," Sacks tells us, "we are not so different from each other; historically, as narratives—we are each of us unique."

Through his title story Sacks shows how grotesquely diminished the world becomes when apprehension of uniqueness is lost. The case in point is that of a musician-educator, Dr. P., referred for examination because he's been making laughable errors in visual discrimination. He reportedly had greeted parking meters in the street, mistaking them for passers-by. Although he could produce a lengthy analysis of the form of a glove or a rose, when shown the objects themselves he could not identify either. In reaching around for his hat, he took hold of his wife's head, as though it were the object he sought. Yet he felt nothing was wrong, and examination showed his intellect to be considerable and intact. Without difficulty he named the complex geometric shapes Sacks handed him. "Don't bother with the others," he told Sacks during testing, "I'll get the eikosihedron too." A disorder in the area of the right half of the brain concerned with visual processing had effectively marooned him: "Visually, he was lost in a world of lifeless abstractions. . . . he construed the world as a computer construes it, by means of key features and schematic relationships. . . . in an 'identiti-kit' way—without the reality being grasped at all."

Sacks uses Dr. P.'s impoverished vision as a symbol for another kind of blindness, self-imposed by the professions that study human understanding. The cognitive sciences—neurology, psychiatry, psychology—can make it seem as if knowing abstractly is the only kind of knowing worth anything. But, Sacks contends:

> Our mental processes, which constitute our being and life . . . involve not just classifying and categorising, but continual judging and feeling also. If this is missing, we become computer-like, as Dr. P. was. And, by the same token, if we delete feeling and judging, the personal, from the cognitive sciences, we reduce *them* to something as defective as Dr. P.—and we reduce *our* apprehension of the concrete and real.

Brina Caplan writes about literature and psychology.

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Alexander Cockburn on THE PRESS.

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Sacks is pushing a Romantic argument against the grain of custom. We are culturally disposed to value the abstract over the concrete; impersonal deduction over personal apprehension and feeling. Developmental psychologists from Freud through Piaget and Kohlberg have described the changes between infancy and adolescence in terms of the child's increasing ability to rise up the ladder of abstraction, away from the immediately felt toward the generalized and universal. To be sunk in specific perceptions is to hit bottom on any of these developmental scales. The "concrete thinker" is seen as stupid, retarded, self-limited, maybe schizophrenic.

With a Romantic spirit worthy of William Blake or D.H. Lawrence, Sacks urges us to look again at basic levels of perception we tend to ignore or to dismiss. Like Wordsworth, he asks us to respect an ability to see vividly in the moment even though such seeing is a form of perception that adults share with children and certifiable idiots. Perhaps the most challenging notion in *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* lies here, in Sacks's Romantic assertion that concrete thinking is not secondary. It is not just the passive foundation on which abstract intelligence raises, stage by stage, the higher orders of wisdom. Concrete thought can also build a worthy architecture of understanding. "The particular," he says in discussing his autistic artist-patient José, "if one is particular enough, is also a road—one might say nature's road—to reality and truth."

In this regard Sacks tells how he came to reassess his initial professional view of a young retarded patient, Rebecca, as a result of seeing her in another context. When formally tested, he reports, Rebecca "had come apart, horribly," amounting to "a mass of sensorimotor impairments and breakdowns, limitations of intellectual schemata and concepts" all loosely bound by the anger, shame and anxiety of repeated and inevitable failure. Later, however, outside in the spring-stirred garden, Rebecca could speak in bursts of concrete images, movingly if haltingly. "An idiot Ecclesiastes," Sacks admits to thinking. In places where she had unconditional acceptance—at home with her grandmother or at her synagogue—she did not look foolish. At times when her emotions were deeply touched, she was composed. Then "there was no sense of handicap or incapacity, but a feeling . . . of being a soul, deep and high, and equal to all others."

It's a Romantic proposition that emotion provides the center for human consciousness. Sacks brings that proposition to life, case by case. His patient Martin, for example, has reached his 60s but seems at times a stunted "snotty child" and at other times an aging curiosity. With perfect ("eidetic") memory, Martin could provide exact information on the music, staging and performance details of 2,000 operas. Much of this perfect recollection, Sacks says, was flat and automatic, as though the data occupied an otherwise blank screen. That was not always so, however; what Martin knew could also have the deepest resonance of love and loss. Sacks explains that Martin's father, a retired opera star, spent the last years of his life

> playing his great collection of vocal records on the phonograph, going through and singing all his scores—which he did with his now thirty-year-old son (in the closest and most affectionate communion of their lives), and reading aloud Grove's dictionary [of music and musicians]—all six thousand pages of it—which, as he read, was indelibly printed upon his son's limitlessly retentive, if illiterate cortex. Grove, thereafter, was "heard" *in his father's voice*—and could never be recollected by him without emotion.

In his account of The World of the Simple, Sacks shows us the power of personal perception to seize a moment, stabilizing it, like a photograph or a painting, in some personally meaningful pattern. Such patterns are doubly powerful in that they both interpret reality and express the soul of the perceiver. In fact, D.H. Lawrence advised people to quit thinking altogether and spend a generation or two learning properly how to feel. Sacks slips every now and then into Lawrence's sort of overwriting, but he does not reproduce any of Lawrence's anti-intellectual prejudices. Clearly, he appreciates the higher cortical functions that bring us neuropsychology or metaphysics or *The New York Review of Books*, his sometime publisher. This world too is his.

Indeed, Sacks's habit is to understand worlds rather than to dismiss them. And his argument with the cognitive sciences is an appeal that they widen their range of vision to include the worlds of the personal within their research and practice. What he's arguing for is a set

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of neglected values: empathetic, emotional, individual, storylike. To ignore those values, he suggests, means constructing a science of cold, rigid design. If coldness and rigidity are qualities suited to a mechanic's tools, which can pry into machinery, they produce equipment inadequate for understanding—much less treating—human beings. As Sacks says in his earlier book on migraine:

> It is neither a technique nor a "treatment" which the physician finally gives, though his giving must include techniques and treatments. What must finally be given is understanding—and courage: an *attitude* that is life-affirming in the face of disease. □

The Comfortable Couch

ADAM PHILLIPS

HOME IS WHERE WE START FROM: Essays by a Psychoanalyst. *By D.W. Winnicott. W.W. Norton. 287 pp. $18.95.*

There has never been a Surrealist tradition in England, though there has been a unique tradition of nonsense. If the British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott sounds like anyone else in the papers collected here, it is Edward Lear or Lewis Carroll or even Stevie Smith. Although occasionally coy, his prose has none of the dreary earnestness or mystifying jargon that mar psychoanalytic writing after Freud and Ferenczi. Winnicott's writing is characterized by a shrewd ingenuousness that is consistent with his therapeutic aim: to protect the privacy of the self in the making of personal sense and, by the same token, personal nonsense. The need to be both intelligible and hidden that he found in his patients is reflected in his style, which is alway evocative before it is provocative. By not being brilliant he gives the reader time. One is not interrupted by the need to react.

This remarkable collection of talks and essays, written between 1940 and 1970, is the best possible introduction to Winnicott's radical English revision of Freud and Melanie Klein. Beginning in the 1930s, Winnicott described and redescribed a psychoanalytic theory of human development that placed particular emphasis on the capacity of mother and child for mutual recognition. Winnicott was the first person in England to come to psychoanalysis from pediatrics; the titles of his two volumes of collected papers, *Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis* and *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment*, suggest his distinctive approach. Whereas for Freud man was essentially the ambivalent animal, for Winnicott man was the dependent animal; dependence was, so to speak, before good and evil. In Winnicott's view there were "natural" processes of development that could be fostered if they were recognized and reciprocated, first by the mother, then by the larger family and finally by the culture. Freud placed culture in opposition to the individual; Winnicott proposed that culture made the individual possible. At a time when psychoanalysis at its most rigorous was supposed to be the art of the unacceptable, Winnicott's work verged on the reassuring. Freud's theory of the individual's proliferating desire seemed to be turning into a story of emotional nurture.

This meant that in England in the 1950s and 1960s there was not so much a return to Freud (as there had been in France) as a return to mother. Under the aegis, though not the leadership, of Winnicott, a "middle" group evolved within the British Psycho-Analytic Society. These analysts formed no school of their own, but their work cohered around a new master plot of human development. Based on an empirical rather than a dialectical tradition, their thinking was characterized by a commitment to observation and empathy, an almost mystical suspicion of abstraction and dogmatism and a belief in people's ability to communicate. Although influenced by Existentialism, they tended to draw their rediscription of Freud from biology, ethology and literature rather than from linguistics and Continental philosophy. Darwin rather than Nietzsche was a guiding spirit. Through Winnicott and the Middle Group, psychoanalysis in England became committed to pluralism instead of

Adam Phillips is a child psychoanalyst in London. He is writing a book on D.W. Winnicott for the Fontana Modern Masters series.

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hero-worship, and to a genuinely collaborative model of treatment in which the analyst creates a setting to facilitate the patient's self-interpretation. For Winnicott one of the aims of analysis was that the patient should be able to surprise himself.

In this version of psychoanalysis there can be no militant or moralistic competence on the part of the analyst. Enabling the patient "to reveal himself to himself" entails a commitment to loose ends, not to conclusive interpretation. "We accept fallibility as a fact of human endearment," Winnicott writes in his essay "Cure." Psychoanalysis is "not just a matter of interpreting the repressed unconscious," but "the provision of a professional setting for trust, in which such work may take place."

Trust tends not to be an inspiring subject in psychoanalytic writing, but Winnicott is rarely sentimental. With his own arch brand of honesty he describes the analytic relationship as "reliability meeting dependence," and distinguishes "remedy-cure" from "care-cure," in which the trust engendered by the analyst—or whomever—encourages the patient's self-healing tendencies. Care-cure may not make people better, but it can enable them to feel more real to themselves. Hobos, as Winnicott once remarked, sometimes feel it is inauthentic for them to be clean. Health is an imposition if it is based on compliance or coercion; virtue is always reciprocal. In the same essay, Winnicott writes:

> A sign of health in the mind is the ability of one individual to enter imaginatively and yet accurately into the thoughts and feelings and hopes and fears of another person; also to allow the other person to do the same to us. . . . When we are face to face with a man, woman or child in our speciality, we are reduced to two human beings of equal status. Hierarchies drop away.

If that is true, it must be peculiarly disabling for analysts to train as they do in America and England, in rigorously hierarchical institutions.

In making psychoanalysis more accessible to the uninitiated, Winnicott often developed his most interesting papers on unexpected subjects. As the editors suggest by their subtitle to this volume, *Essays by a Psychoanalyst*, the papers collected here are not always on traditional psychoanalytic themes, nor are their subjects treated in a conventional way. Because they were presented to a wide range of audiences, and because Winnicott was intent on being understood rather than merely followed, there is no arcane language. Instead, there are a handful of the idiosyncratic terms—"holding," "feeling real," "illusion and disillusion," "true and false self"—that make up his developmental theory. Twelve of the most interesting papers were previously unpublished, and seven others have appeared only in relatively obscure places. Although they touch on varied subjects—learning math, living creatively, the value of depression, feminism, freedom, the Berlin Wall, the pill and the moon—there is inevitably some repetition. Three main themes emerge: dependence and the mother's holding of the child as a paradigm for development; the relative independence of a personal way of life achieved as a ruthless struggle against compliance; and the need to feel real as it is linked to a specific sense of creativity.

In 1940, Winnicott made a surprising announcement at a scientific meeting of the British Psycho-Analytic Society. As he recalls it:

> I found myself saying . . . and I said

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> it rather excitedly and with heat: "There is no such thing as a baby." I was alarmed to hear myself utter these words and tried to justify myself by pointing out that if you show me a baby you certainly show me also someone caring for a baby, or at least a pram with someone's eyes and ears glued to it. One sees a "nursing couple."

Winnicott was pointing to the new set of theories of human development that were evolving in England as a result of his work and Melanie Klein's. Misleadingly called object-relations theories, they emphasized the elaborate and passionate internal world of young children, and the importance of the quality of mothering for their development. If there was no such thing as a baby, the question became, what were mothers for?

Freud had been inspiringly inconsistent in his conceptualization of the child's earliest stages of development, which he largely reconstructed from the reconstructions of his adult patients. From their free associations, his self-analysis and, presumably, his knowledge of his own children, Freud described the newborn infant as entirely self-absorbed, turning to the mother only when it discovered the painful impossibilities of self-satisfaction. Dependence was a concession on the part of the child, who was by nature an exploitative hedonist and for whom development was the gradual, grudging and never completed recognition of the distinct existence of other people. Klein and Winnicott, on the other hand, used their observations of children in their psychoanalytic understanding of adults. Where Freud had found that the infant was in search of sensuous gratification, they believed that the infant was in search of the emotional nourishment that could be provided only by a relationship with another person. Pleasure was the medium of personal contact; the aim of development, in Winnicott's words, was to become isolated without becoming insulated. In this view, instinctual life is a means to relatedness or intimacy. Psychoanalysis becomes a theory of nurture and not of desire. The unacceptable for Winnicott is not sexuality but misrecognition.

In "Children Learning," Winnicott writes:

> It took a long time for the analytic world . . . to look, for example, at the importance of the way a baby is held; and yet, when you come to think of it, this is of primary significance . . . the question of holding and handling brings up the whole issue of human reliability.

It is the mother's holding of the child, in the fullest sense, that makes possible the child's psychosomatic integration. In Winnicott's terms the child has a natural right to use the mother ruthlessly for the recognition and gratification that its development requires. In time the mother will gradually limit her availability, but in a way that makes sense to the child. It is the misunderstandings, the failures of recognition, that are felt to be damaging—the mother's too frequent imposition of her own desire against the grain of the child's, or her primitive disregard.

In this view "adaptation" on the part of the child, one of the touchstones of American ego-psychology, begins to look like what Winnicott calls "compliance." Adaptation at the cost of "feeling real" leads to what Winnicott describes as the "false self." The individual may be socially and intellectually competent but feel inwardly impoverished. This impoverishment is always implicitly connected with the inability to imagine, something that psychoanalysts in America have written very little about. It is characteristic that Winnicott's essay on the pill, for example, stresses the need to tolerate the imaginative complexity, the hotbed of feeling, that the pill must bring with it. "In the imagination the Pill is the silent kill of the babies," he writes. "People have got to be able to have feelings about that." And they must have those feelings in spite of, and along with, a recognition of the opportunities the pill offers. Winnicott wants to "retain the emotional, fantasy side of the thing while still indulging in the extreme of logic." He explains, "I absolutely believe in objectivity and in looking at things straight and doing things about them; but not in making it boring by forgetting the fantasy, the unconscious fantasy." Similarly, in writing on feminism—"the most dangerous thing I have done in recent years"—Winnicott suggests that "the awkward fact remains, for men and women, that each was once dependent on woman, and somehow a hatred of this has to be transformed into a kind of gratitude if full maturity of the personality is to be reached." More startling is the paper's central formulation: "To fully appreciate being a woman one has to be a man, and to fully appreciate being a man one has to be a woman."

In "Living Creatively," Winnicott describes an alternative to the despair of the false self: "[Creativity] must include the idea that life is worth living or not, according to whether creativity is or is not a part of an individual person's living experience. To be creative a person must exist and have a feeling of existing, not in conscious awareness, but as a basic place to operate from." Without this fiction of the "basic place" there is only the despair and resentment born of compliance, the meeting of other people's needs rather than the experiencing of one's own. As he puts it: "In some people at certain times the activities that indicate that the person is alive are simply reactions to stimulus. A whole life may be built on the pattern of reacting to stimuli. Withdraw the stimuli and the individual has no life." There is here a quite different psychoanalytic conception of what a life can be. □

THEATER.

PAUL BERMAN

A Lie of the Mind
Curse of the Starving Class
Drinking in America

In Philip Rahv's famous classification, palefaces are the American writers who cultivate sensibility, refinement, education and discipline. Henry James, for instance. Redskins are the half-baked mystics, the primitives, the gross naturalists, the writers whose strength is experience and energy. Whitman, for instance. The division between these types is deep. Critics who like James rarely like Whitman, and vice versa. Rahv published this theory in 1939 and wondered whether someday the paleface-redskin split would heal over, perhaps when the country was more mature. But who in the age of John Updike and Sam Shepard will say that it has?

Shepard is, of course, the reddest redskin who ever lived. He gives the impression that he would rather knock your ears off with an electric guitar than do anything so prissy as to write a play. "I don't want to be a playwright," the playwright said in a program note fifteen years ago. "I want to be a rock and roll star."

> I like to yodel and dance and fuck a lot. Writing is neat because you do it on a very physical level. Just like rock

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and roll. A lot of people think playwrights are some special brand of intellectual fruitcake with special answers to special problems that confront the world at large. I think that's a crock of shit.

I quote these lines for the laugh, of course. There's no point in discussing Shepard without acknowledging at the start that he's a caricature. But even in lines like these you can see certain of his authentic qualities—his superphysicality and pop culture spontaneity, his abrasiveness and intentional provocation, early-1970s-style. Those qualities constitute one aspect of his redskin originality, though other qualities can be listed.

He has constructed a bleak picture of American life as a cultural badlands dotted with a few national myths as barren of meaning as cactus is of nutrient. This picture meshes perfectly with his abrasive physicality and spontaneity to make scary scenes of astonishing bitterness. "I thought it was going to be turkey dinners and apple pie and all that kinda stuff," says the young woman in *Buried Child*. Goes the reply: "Well I hate to disappoint you." "I'm not disappointed! I'm fuckin' terrified!" A long evening of this makes you feel you've been sitting too close to a madman banging a drum. But it's not a sensation you'll easily forget.

He commands a voice that is well known in American theater. It is the voice that comes to us, perhaps, from Clifford Odets—the eulogistic catch in the throat, the voice of dazed regret or of a slightly embittered nostalgia. In Shepard you hear this voice at the end of plays like *Buried Child* and *Fool for Love*, only since he's not exactly a realist, the voice seems slightly disembodied, and the mood it produces is odd. You feel moved without understanding why; and the combination of being moved without exactly "getting it" is one of his striking effects.

He has developed several theatrical innovations, though the word "developed" may be too strong, since Shepard seems to have entered the theatrical avant-garde with the ease of a man entering his own living room, to paraphrase Trotsky. Ross Wetzsteon has described some of these innovations in the introduction to an edition of Shepard's plays. The playwright has jettisoned conventional theater space and time in favor of space and time that are determined by the emotions of his characters. He has made feelings the basis for action and done away with the ordinary restraints on behavior, so that consciousness and not behavior determines the narrative. He has drawn his characters with a kind of spontaneous line instead of striving for anything coherent. And he does all this with perfect unselfconsciousness. Taken together, his novel techniques produce a kind of crazy fluency, coherent one moment and not the next—which is how people generally are.

The fluency above all is what makes Shepard seem a man of today. By this I mean to distinguish him from what is usually called "modern." The modern style is fragmented and angular, and the audience is intended to piece together a significance. But "todayism" has the quality of an unbroken stream, and the audience is not meant to piece together anything at all. Todayism is the quality that you hear in the music of Steve Reich and his colleagues, where the technique is relentlessly soothing. In theater Shepard is its principal exponent, but of course in his case the technique is hardly soothing. It is relentless, though.

Shepard has cultivated a peculiar comic sense. He is a parodist with a pan as dead as a doornail. There are few punch lines, few opportunities to laugh out loud, few lines that seem funny when read instead of performed. Yet a sense of the ridiculous runs through a large amount of his work. This speech from *Curse of the Starving Class*, when the young sister describes her secret dreams, is an example:

> I was going to work on fishing boats. Deep sea fishing. Helping businessmen haul in huge swordfish and barracuda. I was going to work my way along the coast, stopping at all the little towns, speaking Spanish. I was going to learn to be a mechanic and work on four-wheel-drive vehicles that broke down. Transmissions. I could've learned to fix anything. Then I'd learn how to be a short-order cook and write novels on the side. In the kitchen. Kitchen novels. Then I'd get published and disappear into the heart of Mexico. Just like that guy . . . who wrote *Treasure of Sierra Madre*.

That's a very funny stage speech, as Karen Tull proves in the current production of *Curse* at Michael Bennett's New Theater 890 (a good production all in all, directed by Robin Lynn Smith, though maybe not a good play). The speech mocks the redskin myth itself. And since Shepard goes in and out of parody with the same fluency with which he goes in and out of conventional time and space, you can never be sure when he's making fun and when he's being straight. His work as a whole takes on a semiparodistic quality, which is another aspect of todayism.

Such are the achievements of Sam Shepard. There is, however, a difficulty in the redskin vocation that can't be ignored, though in the atmosphere of Shepard celebration it often is. The difficulty is what to do when a redskin's genius falls short. All writers should be geniuses at all times, of course; but sometimes they are not, and then something must be done. Palefaces fall back on their learning, intelligence and taste. But rough-and-ready redskins, what have they to fall back on? Rahv didn't take up this problem in his essay, but it is a grave one. The redskin is always in danger of plunging into the autodidact's vat of sins—into pretension, pomposity, sentimentality, tastelessness and grandiosity. From brilliant originality to painful amateurism is but a moment's leap.

The gap between the best work of a redskin writer and the worst is therefore almost always immense. For that reason the best had better be spectacular, and the worst had better not come too often. If Whitman, for instance, hadn't been considerably more than a half-baked mystic, he would have turned into Miss Piggy on account of his weakness for French words. In Shepard's case, no one has wanted to acknowledge just how bad the worst can be. Partly that's because of his origins in the embattled avant-garde of the 1960s, whose advocates have naturally preferred championing their hero to making critical judgments about him. But mostly it is because of his cleverness at parody. You tend to think that an author as devilishly satirical as Shepard couldn't possibly be sentimental, that Sam the rock-and-roller could never be guilty of artiness, that the American pop culture mythology could never mystify a man like that. Having sat happily through

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witty speeches such as the one quoted above, you willingly sit through other speeches. For instance, these lines by the brother of the young woman in the same play:

> I was lying there on my back. I could smell the avocado blossoms. I could hear the coyotes. I could hear stock cars squealing down the street. I could feel myself in my bed in my room in this house in this town in this state in this country. I could feel this country close like it was part of my bones. I could feel the presence of all the people outside, at night, in the dark. Even sleeping people I could feel. Even all the sleeping animals. Dogs. Peacocks. Bulls. Even tractors sitting in the wetness, waiting for the sun to come up. I was looking straight up at the ceiling at all my model airplanes hanging by all their thin metal wires. Floating. Swaying very quietly like they were being blown by someone's breath. Cobwebs moving with them.

But these are not funny lines. They are not parody. They are, in fact, the worst sort of purple prose, the most obvious effort to squeeze false emotions—boyhood nostalgia, a fake Western wildness ("I could hear the coyotes")—out of a dramatically dead monologue. They are the lines of a showoff, which is to say, of a redskin gone bad. Surely he's got to be playing some new trick on us, we want to think. We withhold judgment, as so many critics have told us to do. And soon enough Shepard perpetrates yet another ghastly monologue or scene, because lapses in the work of Sam Shepard are anything but infrequent.

His new play, *A Lie of the Mind*, at the Promenade Theater, which he directed as well as wrote, is a regrettably good example. The play opens with a husband telephoning his brother to say he's beaten his wife to death. Words are sharp. The husband is so dislocated he doesn't know which state he's in, just somewhere out West. And the combination of these elements—the West and the anonymous highway, the antagonistic brothers, the brutality between men and women—evokes Shepard's strong points so powerfully you find it hard to believe that subsequent scenes are going to descend into mush.

The wife survives, though she is brain damaged. And the rest of the play becomes a melodrama of recuperation, of a wife recognizing her love in spite of being beaten nearly to death, of a husband recognizing his love in spite of being a violent brute—a play, in short, of the highest, which is to say sappiest, inspirational elements. The originality that we associate with Shepard, the break with realism, the harsh vision of cultural myths, the focus on struggle, the hostility that he portrays so crudely and powerfully, are barely evident. We watch the husband return to his mother's home and come to grips with memories of his unpleasant father: the Past Looms and must be Exorcised. We listen to the talk about how the destiny of women is to be abandoned by men who foolishly think they don't need women: Down-home Wisdom is Expressed. There are the usual prose excesses about hot, dry winds coming off the desert (though it's true that the writing in *A Lie of the Mind* isn't as dreadful as that monologue in *Curse of the Starving Class*). There are the purposeless metaphors, such as the image of a fire in the snow with which the play ends. There are the animadversions on American mythology, for instance on the flag, that imply grand themes without in fact establishing any. There are the family complexities, the fierce loyalty of brother for brother, brother for sister, that become tragically tangled when husband's brother visits battered wife, who falls in love with the wrong sibling. And none of this plays any better than it sounds.

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Shepard has always been a very stageable playwright. The family hostility that he has so often dramatized makes for simple but effective theater configurations. Two characters occupy opposite ends of the stage and fire away, as in *Tooth of Crime*, his most interesting play; or they circle each other like fighting animals, as in *True West* or *Fool for Love*. In plays like these the physical opposition of the actors, as performed on the small stages which suit Shepard's work, makes a vivid image of hatred and bonding, his favored theme. I won't say that these simple stagings render him the most enjoyable of playwrights, but they have been effective, and they have done a lot to cover up weaknesses in the scripts.

A Lie of the Mind, however, with its tale of two families, is too ambitious for such simple staging. Shepard's theme of love *redux* and health *redux* doesn't lend itself to angry circling or squaring off. Instead he divides the stage down the middle, husband's family on the left, wife's on the right, and gives us parallel scenes. Husband on stage left lies on the bed attended by family standing up, and wife on stage right lies on a bed attended by family standing up, and the play as a whole sits in front of you like a stalled train. Having no idea what else to do, the actors seem to have resorted to their most extreme mannerisms. The talented Amanda Plummer plays the battered wife with so many idiosyncrasies of voice and gesture that you can barely see her through the cloud. Ann Wedgeworth as wife's mother seems to have wandered in from a Broadway sex comedy. Geraldine Page as husband's mother relies so heavily on her ironic nasal drawl that you wonder how somebody with such vocal peculiarities found her way to Shepard's hot, dry Western desert. It was a strange bit of casting to select these three women. Among the men, Harvey Keitel was replaced by an understudy the night I attended. Aidan Quinn, Will Patton and James Gammon were all a little less desperately idiosyncratic than the women, but also less vivid.

The background music is another curiosity. Shepard has employed a country group, the Red Clay Ramblers, to chime in now and then. But because the Red Clay Ramblers produce a slick, professional sound that wouldn't be out of place on Broadway, they only succeed in giving *A Lie of the Mind* an oddly smoothed-out feel. The timing of their entrances follows the principles of television background music, so that when the band quietly starts to play, you always know that a scene is coming to a climax. Finally they break into what sounds like a militant hymn to underscore the impression that a Great Statement is being made, perhaps related to the mysterious onstage business about the American flag or the unexplained metaphor about the fire in the snow. But none of this is clear, and you march out of the theater filled with a sense that Shepard has gone long-winded, misty-eyed and soft all at once.

Frank Rich has written that *A Lie of the Mind* "is the unmistakable expression of a major writer nearing the height of his powers." This statement is unmistakably wrong. It would be pleasant to declare that the American theater has produced a new genius, and that Shepard is the man. But the reality is more modest. Shepard has an instinct for staging certain aspects of the 1960s revulsion for the American mainstream, and this instinct has led him to fashion several theatrical innovations, for which he should be celebrated. But he's not a major playwright and the effort to become more than what he is has led to fiascos like *A Lie of the Mind*.

All the rest in regard to Shepard—his movie-star celebrity, the *New York Times* hyperbole—has nothing to do with the art of theater and everything to do with the workings of an American culture that Shepard himself used to know how to satirize.

Eric Bogosian is performing a sort of one-man *Ten Nights in a Barroom* called *Drinking in America* at the American Place Theater. He impersonates a tripping hippie, a street wino, a drunk salesman at a convention, a black junkie and many other characters. One of Bogosian's routines depicts a fascistic fundamentalist preacher who hurls fire and brimstone at Satanism in modern life, and you listen to this insane spiel laughing at how primitive and horrible are fascistic fundamentalist preachers; for his next routine Bogosian brings on a rock concert emcee, and damned if that emcee isn't in fact a tool of Satan, corrupting our youth or at least making it likely that they will crack up the car on the drunken drive home. It's shocking to see this. He brings on a middle-aged junkie who's resigned to a junkie's life and death, and that performance is so sad and truthful you could weep.

Drinking in America is a first-rate evening of theater. Bogosian is a man of a thousand skills, a master of several accents (if not quite as many as he attempts) and all kinds of postures and speech patterns. At the start you admire him for his individual impersonations. Halfway through the evening your reaction turns to pleasure at the range he commands, at the tour de force. By the end he has moved you with the fullness of his emotion. The performance merits comparison to Whoopi Goldberg's one-woman show of last year. Bogosian operates in a narrower plane than Goldberg; he lacks her mastery of emotional extremes. But he has a better grip on the center, he succumbs less frequently to demagoguery, and his evening is more clearly thought out than hers. Bravo Bogosian. □

DANCE.

MINDY ALOFF

Annabelle Gamson
The Nutcracker
Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet

On paper, the New York dance seasons of the past few years might sound vital and exciting. We've seen miraculous revivals of work thought virtually lost, audacious collaborations, production ideas by the boxcar load, visiting troupes from all over the earth. But if you follow dance in the city consistently, you probably aren't as happy as you were five years ago. Death, retirement, injury and the paling of genius have helped account for that. But there has also been a disturbing shift in the way choreographers imagine the human body. Ideas one would find occasionally in concerts are now pervasive. Just since last September, I've watched dancers represent themselves as fractured, deformed, controlled from without, bound up from within, suffocated, enfeebled, ghastly, even extinct. Choreographers of every style and rank of ability are caught up in a mood of dis-ease so profound that it affects their thought on the most basic level. It's in keeping with our time that the ballroom dance enjoying a renaissance from Broadway to the Bowery should be the tango, which celebrates death and doomed love.

We owe some of this darkness to the bitter palettes of the Japanese Butoh and

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German Tanztheater groups so widely publicized now, and to their imagery of a world traumatized or in decay. But the origins of that imagery lie farther back. This month, the Dance History Scholars group is devoting a day of its national meeting in New York to the German Expressionist choreographer Mary Wigman (1886-1973), with whom leading Butoh and Tanztheater figures studied; perhaps the historians will isolate her allure. Was her violation of the dancer's image a part of it? Like Isadora Duncan, Wigman went into her studio alone and developed a theory of movement. Unlike Duncan, who "finally discovered the central spring of all movement" in her effort to make the body reflect the slightest shadings of the soul, Wigman sought a way for the soul to consume the body. "Time and again I gave myself up to the intoxication of this experience," she wrote in her memoirs, "to this lustful destruction of the physical being, a process in which, for seconds, I almost felt a oneness with the cosmos."

In films of Wigman dancing, and in the pieces revived by Annabelle Gamson at Dance Theater Workshop in January, that lustful destruction appears to take the form of dissociation: a hand snaking around as if on its own say-so, a head swiveling uncannily above a still chest, a hip jutting forth from a statuesque pose. In contrast to Isadora, for whom the body was an organism attuned to "some invisible music," Wigman zoned her flesh into various forces that the dancer played against one another, like Metternich manipulating nation-states. Isadora's actions are at one with her feelings; Wigman's hand potentially traduces her heart.

Dis-ease and ease: Is this the irreducible either-or of modern dance? Is all the "new theatricality" about fighting against one's impulses—as opposed to the old theatricality, in which one's instincts lead one on? Are Wigman and Duncan complementary opposites, like Dionysus and Apollo, or does Wigman's anti-grace represent a complete break from the moral conviction Duncan embodied? Gamson herself seems unable or unwilling to perform Wigman's dances in the queasily detached manner that Wigman perfected; instead, she makes them full-bodied, centered, as if Duncan had created them. "I danced all my life," Gamson has said, contrasting her experience with Wigman's, who wrenched her body into shape. Could it be that for all the power of Wigman's theatrical images and ideas, what makes

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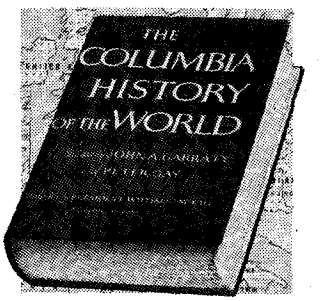

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her work most interesting is antithetical to real dancing?

The curtain rises on the second act of Balanchine's *Nutcracker*. There are twelve little girls. They wear golden-brimmed hats and A-shaped gowns that skim the floor, and each holds the tip of a fir tree in one hand. The other hand is carefully carried to the side, fingers curled so that thumb and middle finger touch—a position between an infant's fist and the mature fingering of classic style. The faces are clear and still. Tchaikovsky's enchantment begins.

The dance is based on a running walk. Thanks to the long, stiffened skirts, the dancers appear to glide. It's the same effect that the Moiseyev women pull off so spectacularly, whooshing along with the oiled power of the speeding escalators in the Moscow underground. Here, however, the interest isn't athletic force, of which the children are incapable, or even regimental order, in which they've been drilled. It's their sustained concentration. They break into opposing lines which intersect at the center to form a living cross midstage. Even someone who doesn't dance can appreciate how important precise timing is for the dancers as they enter the heart of that X: one miscount and everyone would collide. An observer registers the possibility of such disaster, and goes on watching.

The other choreographic figures are simple yet also sharply timed. How sober the girls look doing them! The faces are frosted by a blizzard of thrill and terror; the trees tingle with the pressure to count, count, count. A bracing chilliness, as at an ice rink, and the shimmer of fragile things, like Christmas ornaments—these are the number's special qualities. They result directly from the meter of the dancers' steps, the carriage of their hands, the age and experience of their bodies. Their spiritual identity is a function of what they do. Balanchine made many dances with more complex interest. In *Nutcracker*, the crossing Snowflakes have more visceral excitement and the overlapping patterns of the Flowers convey a more poignant emotion. But nowhere is the essence of his dance theater more nakedly available than here, in the dance of the Angels.

In classic dancing, meaning isn't a rhetorical message behind the steps but a pattern, a continuity among events. As one tracks that continuity, one can't help but understand it as a process of thought, the way one follows the continuity from sentence to sentence in a spontaneous conversation. The choreographer may have had his own ideas about what occasioned this process or that; critics offer public ones. But the meaning isn't the occasion. It's the particular way one dance moment grows out of another.

Balanchine's 1966 *Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet*, revived by City Ballet this season with sumptuous décor by David Mitchell, has a meaning that unfolds as one watches it, independent of the idea that the ballet is set at the end of the Austro-Hungarian empire—the inspiration behind the new production. The first of the four sections features two kinds of female dancer. The first, a soloist, is often placed downstage, like a guide figure in an allegorical painting. She's tall and powerful. (This is one of the repertory's "big girl" parts.) Her movement is marked by revolution and torque, but because she keeps her body on a vertical axis the effect is conservative as well as grand. The second woman, a ballerina, is partnered by a cavalier. Her choreography is more linear than the soloist's; design is emphasized over volume. Sometimes the steps take the ballerina off the vertical, but thanks to the presence of her partner, she has the freedom to clarify the glancing lines and canted angles—to appear to risk her weight without actually risking her balance. By the final, fourth movement of *Brahms-Schoenberg*, the qualities of the big soloist and the supported ballerina have been collapsed into one ballerina figure. She has a partner, but her choreography asks a great deal of solo virtuosity from her—bent-kneed pirouettes, vertiginous balances, a large, apparently careless attack. And yet, in the partnered sections, she's taunting, elaborately playful—not through acting but because the movement makes her so.

One of the revelations of the new production is that the original dancers' "personalities" are, in fact, elements built into the roles. The Suzanne Farrell figure of the fourth movement, the "Rondo alla Zingarese"—whose twisting shoulders and extensions draw the eye to her hips and thighs—survives when Kyra Nichols or Merrill Ashley is cast in the part, although neither of them fits it as exactly as Farrell. The same goes for Patricia McBride's role in the second movement, the "Intermezzo," when Heather Watts is cast there. This is, I suppose, what Balanchine's dancers mean

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when they compare his method of choreographing a role for an individual to a *couturier*'s tailoring a suit for a model. The suit will fit any size seven, but it will fit the model like a second skin.

Another revelation of the *Brahms-Schoenberg* performances has been the work's amazing integrity of tone. The first and third movements used to be less popular among fans, but with Maria Calegari's arrowing lines and hair-trigger timing, the first section now looks pure where it once looked bare, and with Darci Kistler and Jock Soto as the leads, the third section looks fully translated to a new generation of dancers. Throughout the ballet, you can now follow a little "plot" of visual display and physical support: How much help does the ballerina need to show herself off? Some people find the ballet mannered because of the discrepancy between the sweeping formal drama and the intricate strategies required to accomplish it. One can also see the discrepancy as irony, of the sort that Balanchine would investigate in depth the following year in the "Rubies" section of *Jewels*. But "mannered" or "ironic" are interpretations. The meaning is the change in the ballerina's style over the course of the work, as she gradually becomes more independent of her cavalier. It signaled a development in Balanchine's imagination equivalent to a forest fire, but there's nothing esoteric about it. The conversion of energy is there, nightly, on stage. □

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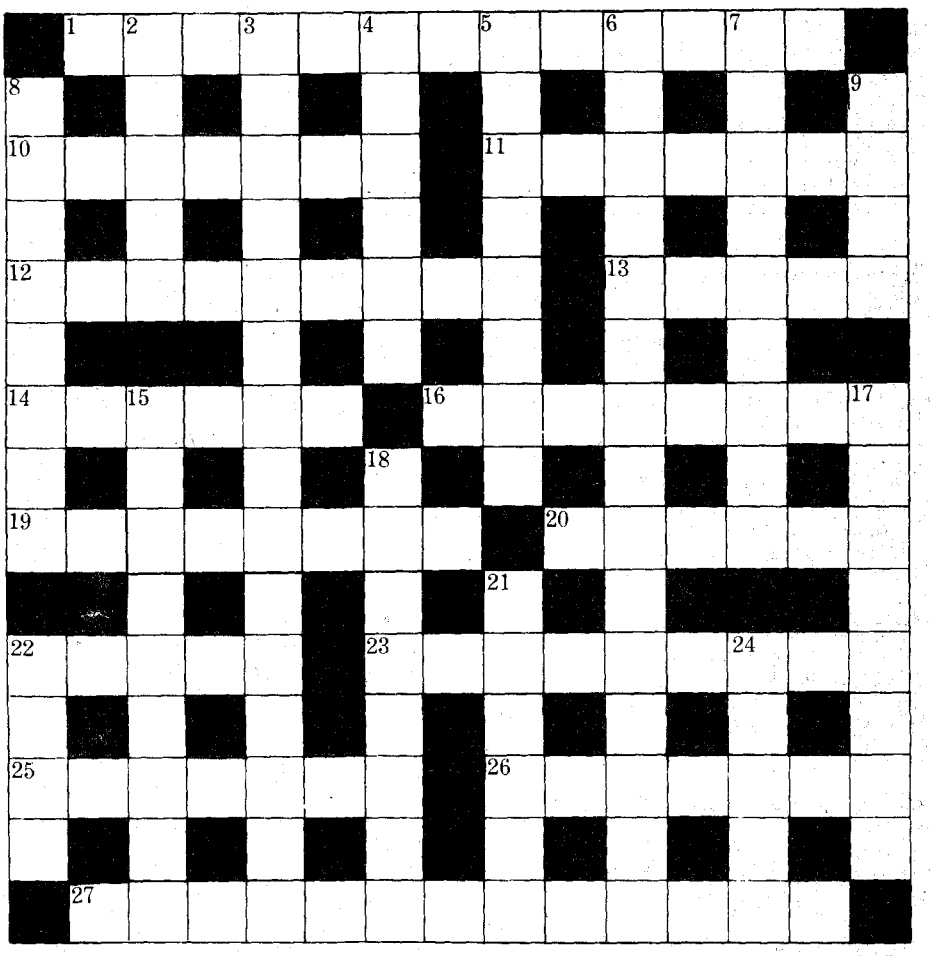

ACROSS

1 Dance at a spot next to where the animals are kept, according to certain writers. (4,5,4)
10 A certain method of growing things is nothing but caring, in the following way. (7)
11 Possibly a straight description of one way up. (3-4)
12 A simple comparison regarding the final course. (4,2,3)
13 Contracts are said to be by some writers—your pad might not be good if it isn't. (5)
14 A seed might be one quarter identical. (6)
16 Hoping to get something for your headache that goes on a string? (8)
19 Unless you're well covered you might not find the hospital so easygoing. (8)
20 Ranged all over the place, but certainly not in safety. (6)
22 The thing the baseball team will never see the last of when they're home. (5)
23 Prepared the other way around—but you might have such a habit. (5-4)
25 If you've broken a leg, oil might be in order for the one discovering sunspots. (7)
26 Look around Walden, for example, if you want a couple of heavy beats. (7)
27 Make a picture of the soldiers all standing stiff and straight—it's a way to make people take notice! (4,9)

DOWN

2 What was he on the constant lookout for? Refined sugar! (5)
3 Suggests that a posse might carry old Kentucky rifles—implying the criminal will be caught sooner or later. (4,3,2,3,3)
4 Take place, in a sense. (6)
5 Not a very specific geographical place, but in all earnest a possibility. (4,4)
6 Probably marks the top of the card. (You might see more than one round, or you might not.) (11,4)
7 You haven't a clue, given this. (2,7)
8 Wrong, since for the sake of argument it's debatable as well! (8)
9 It might be a good place for animals to take off. (4)
15 There's a certain lack of inspiration due to one's performance. (9)
17 One probably works in a cultivated environment. (8)
18 Seems to prove what Goldilocks found. (5,3)
21 An equality of standing with the jurisdiction of a bishop, perhaps a Zoroastrian. (6)
22 Perhaps talks too much of horses, commonly. (4)
24 One might see this with frequency, or hear it. (5)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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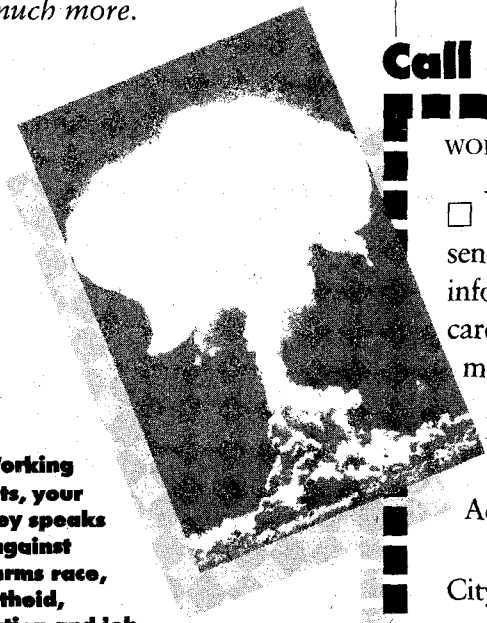

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